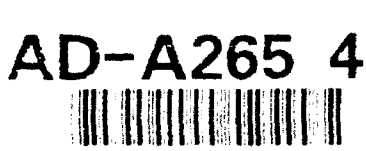
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# PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP AND DECISIONMAKING: NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY IN TRANSITION 1992-93

BY

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# PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP AND DECISIONMAKING: NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY IN TRANSITION 1992-93

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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**CONTENTS**


I. Introduction.....1

II. Strategic Leader Competencies.....7

Conceptual Competencies.....10

Cognitive Competencies.....11

Emotional Competencies.....16

Technical Competencies.....23

Interpersonal Competencies.....25

III. Presidential Decisionmaking.....31

Politics.....36

Decisionmaking Process.....41

Traditional Executive Decisionmaking.....45

Advisory Malfunctions.....47

Clinton Decisionmaking Process.....50

Individual Impediments to Decisionmaking.....53

Personality.....58

Personality Summaries of Recent Presidents.....59

President Bush and His Advisors.....62

President Clinton.....65

President Clinton's Advisors.....68

Decisionmaking by Recent Presidents.....70

The Clinton Presidency.....72

Relating Presidential Decisionmaking to Strategy.....75

IV. Emerging National Security Strategy.....78

Definition of Strategy.....81

National Values.....83

National Interests.....85
Consensus.....89
National Security Strategy.....90
Ends, Ways, and Means.....93
Strategy-Vision Hybrid Model.....95
Present Situation: The Geo-Political Landscape.....99
The Congress.....100
The President.....103
President Clinton's Emerging Strategy.....106
V. Conclusion.....109
End Notes.....113
Bibliography.....123

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Leadership Skills.....8

Figure 2. Strategic Leader Competencies.....9

Figure 3. Trade-off Dilemmas in Presidential Decisionmaking...35

Figure 4. The NSC Staff as a Conduit.....40

Figure 5. Clinton NSC Characters and Relationships.....69

Figure 6. Strategy Formulation Guideline.....82

Figure 7. Vision Model.....87

Figure 8. The Horizonal Plane of National Strategy.....92

Figure 9. Strategy = Ends + Ways + Means.....93

Figure 10. Military Means.....96

Figure 11. Strategy-Vision Hybrid Model.....97

# I. INTRODUCTION

National security strategy establishes the objectives, concepts, and resources to accomplish U.S. national interests. Strategy formulation and implementation are among the foremost duties of national government. In a democracy, it is important to understand how elected national leaders develop the strategy to accomplish national security. The purpose of this study is to examine the role of strategic leadership and presidential decisionmaking in the strategy formulation process. Because strategy formulation is a political process, it can only be studied in that context. Strategy is the product of contemporary political forces, the tenets of the Constitution, and enduring American values. A major supporting theme of this study is the role of politics in strategic leadership, presidential decisionmaking, and strategy formulation. This study, in the 1992-93 political setting, is simply a method for understanding the national security strategy process.

The scope of this study is limited to the presidency including presidential advisors and the interaction with the Congress. The 1992 presidential election and emerging Clinton administration policies are used to illustrate the national security process. This study draws heavily on events and political actors of 1992 not only because they are relevant but also because of the major geo-political change of the times and the stark difference between President Clinton, his political opponents, and his predecessors. President Bush and his

administration provide the primary basis of comparison. The Johnson through Reagan presidencies provide additional perspective.

Although domestic and economic issues are the clear focus of the emerging Clinton administration, this study is concerned more with how the military element of national power interacts with the political and economic elements in the national security process. Clearly, the domestic situation and reducing the deficit are of major importance to national security. However, if the president becomes too distracted from defense plans and operations, the risk to his influence and to national security come suddenly when a crisis occurs.

The presidential election year stimulated thought on where the nation is headed and which of the candidate's ideas and abilities are best suited for national leadership. The voters elected Governor Clinton -- a young, idealistic, liberal governor of a tiny rural state. Voters chose him over President Bush -- the serving president who is a conservative national security expert with significant federal executive experience. Only eighteen months earlier President Bush had enjoyed unprecedented national approval as president. The election campaign and outcome reveal contemporary national interests and politics that provide insight to strategy formulation, strategic leadership, and presidential decisionmaking.

Foreign, domestic, economic, and military issues fired national interest debates. Strategic leadership issues ranged

from presidential vision to crisis management. In the end, a simplified interpretation is that Governor Clinton captured more American interest by campaigning on domestic and economic issues. President Bush, a Cold Warrior and hero of the Persian Gulf War, campaigned on his performance in crises and the fact that the world is still a dangerous place. Closer examination of these issues provides insight to the national security process.

Strategic leader limitations, as well as competencies, affect strategy formulation and related presidential decisions. If President Clinton won the election because Americans saw his domestic and economic vision as the essence of the best strategy for the era, voters should be aware of a key strategic leadership limitation -- his lack of knowledge regarding planning and employment of the military element of national power. Even if President Clinton articulates a superb economic and domestic strategy on which all parties agree, he could lose the political influence necessary to implement his strategy. Making serious mistakes with the U.S. military is a fast way to lose general political influence. Few exercises of national power are as media-worthy and measurable in success or failure as the employment of the armed forces by the commander-in-chief. No element of national power affects support for the president more dramatically than the outcome of military campaigns and battles. This relates directly to the presidential decisionmaking process.

The president's personality, his advisors, and the Congress are major influences on presidential decisionmaking. President

Clinton cannot rely on his instincts and experience in military matters; he must rely on advice. Whom he chooses to advise him, his relationship with congressional leaders in defense, and how he uses the advice to make military decisions are critical to his performance as commander-in-chief. High performance as commander-in-chief is necessary but not sufficient for President Clinton to realize his domestic, economic, and political agenda.

In addition to those whom he chooses to advise him, the president is obligated to work closely with the Congress. The president's cabinet, especially the National Security Council, advise him on national security strategy and policy decisions. However, without the tacit or explicit approval of key members of the Congress, major presidential decisions will not stand. Senator Sam Nunn, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee is President Clinton's main ally or adversary on major defense decisions. To this point the relationship has been adversarial. This condition decreases the likelihood that the president will consult regularly and closely with Senator Nunn. This exacerbates the president's situation in national security decisionmaking. It also puts a much higher premium on the role of the president's statutory defense advisors. It is interesting that the political and personal relationship between the president and a member of congress directly affects the importance of the advice, political acumen, and communication skills of senior military leaders.

This study is written primarily for military people who

assist presidential advisors. On 30 March 1993, General George Joulwan, Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command admonished the U.S. Army War College Class of 1993 to, "Give advice before your military and civilian masters know they need it. You must have the moral courage to do so." An advisor must have a firm grasp on national strategy, executive decisionmaking, political forces, and how strategic leaders operate. This firm grasp may reduce the "courage" element of advice and increase the quality. Politics may be the weakest area of expertise for military advisors. Advisors who lack political expertise, regardless of the reasons, may be of little use to a national strategic leader. Advice to political leaders must be given in consideration of relevant political factors.

This study is organized in three sections: strategic leader competencies, presidential decisionmaking, and strategy formulation. Each section builds on the preceding one. A strategic leader's competencies or skills comprise the individual in a political strategic setting. They determine the leader's strengths and weaknesses and the nature of advice the leader needs to complement his capabilities. Presidential decisionmaking is a function of the collective competencies of the president and his advisors. Key among these competencies is how to maximize the benefit of available advice, or, how to best make collective executive decisions without wasting valuable time in the process. Finally, national security strategy is a product of effective presidential decisionmaking and also facilitates

future presidential decisions if the strategy is used as a major criterion for choosing a policy option.

Our president may be a gifted politician, but he has many competency voids which must be addressed by his advisors. He should not be made to wait on good advice. His advisors should understand and control the impediments in collective processes that degrade or slow down presidential advice.

The new president and commander-in-chief is in office. No American should want him to fail and appointed members of government, including the military, are obligated to help him succeed. He is responsible for the world's most important and difficult decisions. He needs the best advice possible. In that light, the next section of this study examines strategic leader competencies. The level of competence determines the nature of advice the strategic leader requires.

## II. STRATEGIC LEADER COMPETENCIES

This section examines competencies unique to strategic leaders. The approach is to understand and advise strategic leaders rather than to prescribe how to become a strategic leader. A strategic leader's advisors and staff should understand how the strategic contributes to national security by virtue of his competencies. With this knowledge, the advisors can supplement and respond appropriately to the leader's activities. Likewise, by understanding his own competencies, a leader can best select advisers to cover his intellectual and experiential gaps. The source material for this study comes from executive and strategic leader literature -- much of it military. A comprehensive list of competencies is beyond the scope of this effort. Therefore, this study of strategic leader competencies is simply a framework for understanding strategic leadership. From the military view, Army leadership doctrine says:

> Lieutenant colonels focus on the competencies of strategic-level leadership to be effective advisors of strategic-level leaders. They should already be well versed in the theory and practice of leadership at the senior level. You [sic] should be familiar with applicable current Army leadership doctrine and principles to include characteristics and competencies of the ideal strategic leader.[1]

Leader development doctrine recognizes three levels of leadership -- direct, senior, and strategic -- and three categories of leadership competencies -- technical, interpersonal, and conceptual. This framework guides the examination of presidential leadership. Figure 1[2] shows that as

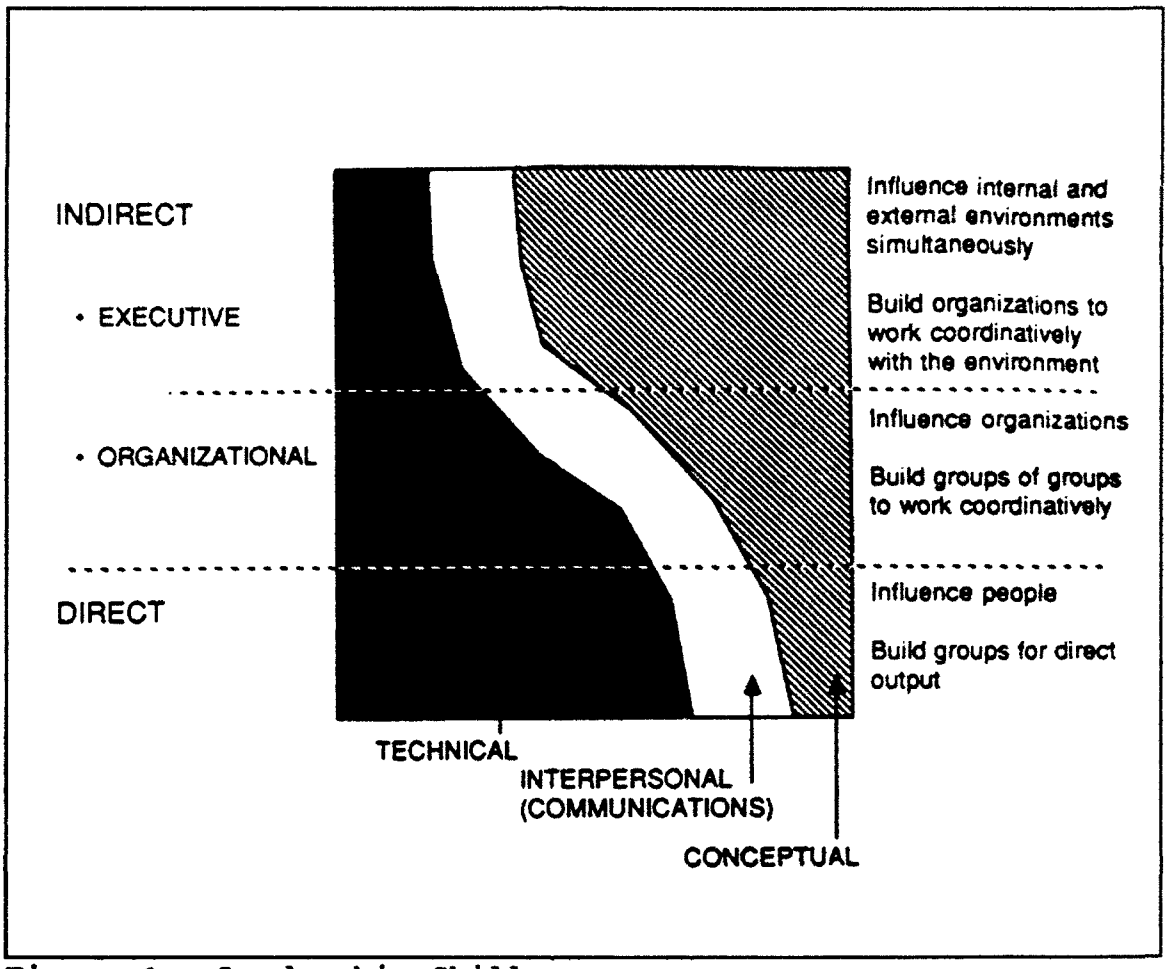



**Figure 1.** Leadership Skills

leaders rise from direct to executive levels of leadership, the importance of technical competence decreases and conceptual competence increases. Interpersonal competence remains constant.[3] Therefore, this discussion concentrates more on conceptual than on technical skills. Although interpersonal skills are portrayed as constant in importance, this does not suggest they do not change. The interpersonal skills that make the difference for an indirect, executive leader evolve with his tasks and the people he influences. Key among these skills is a leader's ability to communicate effectively on television.

Today's strategic leaders understand this as political reality and work extraordinarily hard to do it well.

| | |
|---|---|
| **CONCEPTUAL** | **TECHNICAL** |
| **Cognitive** | Politics |
| Frame of Reference | Culture |
| Vision | Strategy |
| Openmindedness | |
| Synthesis | |
| Second-order Effects | |
| Opportunity Recognition | |
| **Emotional** | **INTERPERSONAL** |
| Moral Development | Consensus Building |
| Temperament | Public Speaking |
| Self-Efficacy | Climate Setting |
| Tolerance of Ambiguity | |
| Boldness | |
| Tenacity | |

**Figure 2.** Strategic Leader Competencies

To understand strategic leader competencies, it should be distinguished from other leader skills. Competencies are behaviorally specific but distinctly different from job tasks. At the strategic level, these competencies produce an observable difference between average and superior leader performance.[4] Thus, a competency may be a skill, proficiency, mastery, adeptness, capacity, knowledge, genius,[5] instinct, or insight. Competencies are capabilities rather than traits and are improvable in degree if not changeable in underlying structure.[6] Strategic leader competencies are uniquely different from direct and organizational leader competencies, or so different in degree that they are different in kind. At Figure 2 are the strategic leader competencies to be examined.

These competencies may be considered with the 1992

presidential election in mind. Each candidate benefits from the competencies in various degrees. Further, each competency affects presidential decisionmaking in how the president chooses advisors, how he leads and participates in the process, the climate he sets, his frame of reference, his vision and how he interprets the various influences on the process. Through the decision process national security strategy is formulated and then implemented. Implementation is also affected by the competencies of the president as a strategic leader.

Conceptual Competencies

For this study conceptual competencies include the two sub-categories of cognitive and emotional competencies. Cognitive power or thinking ability is a nearly indisputable strategic leader competency. *However, emotional* competencies are often deemed controllable or irrelevant. In fact, leaders operate in the emotional dimension routinely. However, emotions tend more to affect cognition than the opposite. Therefore, strategic leader cognitive competency is the first conceptual competency to examine.

Problems are sometimes described as being either convergent or divergent in nature. Convergent are more easily solved because the more they are studied the more the answers converge. The important problems strategic leaders face usually have no correct solution and are divergent -- the more they study them, the more answers contradict each other.[7] The challenges of a faltering economy, declining education and infrastructure,

soaring health costs, federal budget deficits, and international violence are divergent, requiring multi-dimensional responses.[8] Key cognitive competencies that contribute to effective strategic leadership and solving divergent problems include frame of reference, vision, openmindedness, synthesis, concern for second-order effects, and opportunity recognition.

Cognitive Competencies

Frame of Reference. Frame of reference is a mental map to structure and interpret experience. This enables a leader to understand cause, effect, and patterns formed by events.[9] For example, a battalion commander and a service chief studying operations of "Task Force Smith" may think differently because they have different frames of reference. One former battalion commander concluded that the poor performance of Task Force Smith was due to poor training, material shortages, and the distractions of recreational activity. In contrast, the service chief may think about the politics after World War II that placed an infantry battalion on the path of an enemy mechanized division.[10] This is nearly identical to a political decision the president must make today. Given the actual North Korean threat and U.S. Army reductions, the parallels are chilling. The militarily experienced president understands the lurking danger. The inexperienced one cannot relate to American KIAs and hence the specter diminishes in his mind.

The strategic leader frame of reference evolves not only by virtue of diverse experience but also by how effectively the

leader studies and learns from experience. The cognitive competence, or intellect, of the strategic leader determines to a large extent the limits of his frame of reference.

A strategic leader frame of reference does not evolve for everyone. As mentioned, strategic leaders use their intellect effectively. When presented with a novel problem that they cannot assimilate into their frame of reference, they accommodate it. This accommodation constitutes a continuous reshaping and growth of the frame of reference. Openmindedness[11] facilitates this growth. Rather than routinely hammering new data into primitive frames of reference, strategic leaders seek to understand, and so develop more diverse and expanding frames of reference. Restructuring frames of reference is always in the direction of greater cognitive complexity. The result is a more adaptive leader.[12]

In fact, everybody learns from experience, but they learn differently based on their function, cognitive abilities, and interest in expanding their personal frame of reference. A private knows little more about planning a campaign after having fought one than he did before. As Jomini reminds us in the famous words of Frederick, "A mule that had made twenty campaigns under Prince Eugene would not be a better tactician than at the beginning."[13] This example simply points out that leaders do not benefit equally from experience. This is due in part to their willingness to struggle with the broader issues of what is happening in the greater scope of activities. Over the years,

those both willing and able may develop frames of reference appropriate to strategic leadership. That frame of reference combined with other competencies and opportunity may produce a strategic leader.

Cognitive Complexity. Strategic leaders use higher order cognitive processes and cognitive complexity. The cognitive process takes information, picks it over, analyzes it, and puts it back together. Information is reorganized and judged. Conclusions lead to plans and then action.[14] Cognitive power is the ability to pattern and construe the complexity of the present and future environment. The longer the time span of a role, the more complex is the work.[15]

Analysis and synthesis are other terms associated with higher order cognition. Analysis is breaking a concept into its constituent elements then comparing and contrasting the elements. Synthesis is combining previously unrelated elements to form a new whole. Additional cognitive competencies demonstrated to be successful across a broad range of settings are:

**Differentiation** -- the ability to discern alternative meanings from information beyond that which is immediately obvious.
**Integration** -- the ability to consider how a previous action can provide a foundation for a later activity.
**Multiple Planning** -- the ability to recognize multiple paths to the same goal and the necessity to select as many of these paths as possible to assure success.
**Flexibility** -- the ability to remain open to new interpretations of events, task demands, and changed options for action.
**Understanding limitations** -- the ability to regulate information flow so it can be understood.[16]

A pitfall of higher order cognition is loss of focus because

the leader considers too much information in too complex a fashion. A presidential candidate may lose focus in an effort to be all things to all people. If he wins, he soon changes as resources against objectives is a zero-sum game. Some aims must be sacrificed for others. To condition higher order cognitive competencies, strategic leaders need a refined ability to recognize and avoid irrelevant and marginal issues. One such ability is scanning, or the ability to search purposefully and quickly through information to identify and apply critical new factors.[17] At its peak, the effective union of cognition and scanning can produce what Clausewitz terms a "sense of unity and power of judgment raised to a marvelous pitch of vision"[18] In sum, strategic leaders have the mental power to select and use information in complex ways to provide simplified aim and process.

Vision. For vision that combines the real with the ideal, strategic leaders need a distinctly future focus. They understand how the components of their system operate interdependently within a total system. Actions by one component have implications for other components. Visionary leaders see feasible futures within increasingly longer time horizons and anticipate second- and third-order consequences of their decisions.[19]

The presidency may serve as the ultimate test of balancing the ideal against the real among the array of political obstacles and motives. When a presidential candidate's campaign promise

collides with the reality of a presidential decision after winning office, second-order effects become stark reality rather than a sound bite consideration. Candidate Clinton's campaign promise to lift the military ban on homosexuals collided with the reality of grass roots American values embodied in the Congress. It appeared that President Clinton did not anticipate that the second-order effect of his presidential action would mire most other presidential business for three critical weeks early in his presidency.

Opportunity Recognition. Strategic leaders see problems and obstacles while they are still small and manageable. They seize opportunities that go unseen by associates who operate only in the present. Vision enhances pattern and opportunity recognition and proactive action. Strategic leaders have a strong sense that they can affect events and shape the future. To do this, they must see events unfold in the context of their vision. The ability to recognize patterns as events unfold enables them to recognize and exploit opportunities. This multi-level analysis with a future focus characterizes an active, expanding strategic frame of reference. It enables leaders to recognize not only small, incremental factors but also major shifts and realignments in the strategic environment. Leaders who recognize patterns and opportunities can act preemptively and decisively. Voters viewed President Bush as a leader without vision, especially regarding the domestic agenda. He did nothing to correct that view and instead exploited his reputation as a crisis manager. His

credibility there goes unquestioned. But it is irrelevant as voters are not interested in crisis management unless there is a crisis.

Emotional Competencies

Emotional predispositions have a significant effect on cognitive skills. Emotion, instinct, and motivation temper the application of cognitive skills. Key competencies include moral reasoning, integrity, temperament, self-efficacy, tolerance of ambiguity, boldness, and tenacity.

Moral Reasoning. Strategic leaders' sophistication of moral reasoning develop from a lifetime of experience and the study of ethics and morality.[20] Highly developed levels of moral reasoning go beyond social contract such as the greatest good for the greatest number. The highest levels of moral reasoning come from universal ethical principles that apply in all situations, e.g., respect for life, liberty, human rights, and the dignity of humankind; and an individual can improve his level of moral reasoning by studying ethics and morality and by solving complex moral dilemmas.[21]

Historical examples of difficult moral dilemmas illustrate the point. Consider Franklin Roosevelt's possible knowledge of the attack on Pearl Harbor and permitting it to go unwarned. Winston Churchill decided not to evacuate Coventry knowing the Germans planned to bomb it. He did this to protect his strategic intelligence sources. Harry Truman decided to use a nuclear weapon on Japan. Moral considerations drove these decisions more

than pragmatic factors. Only strategic leaders with high levels of moral reasoning can resolve moral dilemmas of such proportions.

During the campaign there was much ado regarding Governor Clinton's moral behavior of dodging the draft during the Vietnam War. It would have been easier for him to take a cushy job as an officer in the reserves than his political slight-of-hand to avoid service. It can be argued that in his mind he chose the harder right rather than the easier wrong. This is moral reasoning. An eighteen-year-old George Bush followed his conscience against advice and volunteered to fight in WW II rather than go to college. He too chose the harder right. Without question, the Bush choice is patriotic and courageous if not reasonable. However, the Clinton choice may represent the more complex, politically courageous, and personally risky choice. For the average American, Bush is the model. For political acumen, which young man showed more complex moral reasoning?

Integrity. Integrity of the strategic leader goes beyond truth-telling, promise-keeping, and reliability. Integrity has a special meaning to executives. It does not refer to simple honesty, but embodies a consistency and predictability built over time that says, "I will do exactly what I say I will do when I say I will do it. If I change my mind, I will tell you well in advance so you will not be harmed by my actions."[22] Strategic leaders must cope with complex and numerous behavioral and moral

codes of conduct.[23] Candidate Clinton's promise to homosexuals and President Clinton's action provide grist for a lively case study of executive integrity.

International politics and alliances compound domestic politics. Values of international leaders and interests of their constituencies often force leaders to strike expedient agreements with people they distrust personally. Churchill and Roosevelt's dealing with Stalin comes to mind. Strategic leaders must be well-anchored ethically in a sea of politics, compromises, and often questionable methods. In addressing problems without solutions, there will always be an ethical dimension. Leaders will negotiate and compromise on value-laden issues routinely. This takes courage and self-confidence which both contribute to self-efficacy.

Self-Efficacy. Beyond self-confidence is self-efficacy, a characteristic closely related to a sense of internal control or direction.[24] This is belief in oneself as an effective agent in and on the environment. It is interwoven with that of self-fulfilling prophecy. Belief in the possibility of success is a prerequisite.[25] If he does not sense that he can affect the course of events, strategic leader vision and opportunity recognition are of little utility.

Shaping the future according to vision is more than just setting the azimuth for the institution. It is a single-minded force pursuing vision and requires even temperament, openmindedness, clarity of thought, and alertness to obstacles

and vague opportunities along the way.

Temperament. A study of talented executives demonstrated a key difference between arrivers (those who reached the top of their organizations) and those who derailed. Under pressure, derailed executives were often moody and volatile. In contrast the arrivers were calm, confident, and predictable. Arrivers also handled adversity, and particularly their own mistakes with grace and poise. They admitted their mistakes, accepted personal responsibility, and moved crisply onward not dwelling on the error.[26] Such temperament aids presence of mind and is documented centuries back by historic strategic leaders:

> Not to be anxious; to be always cool; to avoid confusion in his commands; never to change countenance; to give his orders in the midst of battle with as much composure as if he were perfectly at ease. These are the proofs of valor in a general.[27]
>
> Count de Montecuccoli, 1740

> The first qualification in a general is a cool head -- that is, a head which receives accurate impressions, and estimates things and objects at their real value. He must not allow himself to be elated by good news, or depressed by bad.[28]
>
> Napoleon

The presidential candidates' volatility was a media focus. The coolest head was Bill Clinton. The hottest was Ross Perot. President Bush fell between tending toward the hotter more than the cooler.

Introspection is the ability to reflect on oneself and it demands a certain openness to criticism of self and criticism of the organization. Strategic leaders will make mistakes. Part of greatness is how they handle the adversity. Knowing what

behaviors are intolerable to colleagues and constituents is one key. A sense of humor is another.[29] Not taking oneself too seriously and the ability to laugh at mistakes creates a climate of free thinking and risk taking. Such a climate facilitates success in strategically oriented organizations.

Sun Tzu's five sins of a general shows that temperament of strategic leaders has been on citizens' minds for centuries:

> - Recklessness, which leads to destruction
> - Cowardice, which leads to capture
> - Hasty temper that can be provoked by insults
> - Delicacy of honor that is sensitive to shame
> - Over-solicitude for his men, which exposes him to worry and trouble. These are the five besetting sins of a general, ruinous to the conduct of war.[30]
>
> - A final reminder from Sun Tzu is on selflessness: The general who advances without coveting fame and retreats without fearing disgrace, whose only thought is to protect his country and do good service for his sovereign, is the jewel of the kingdom.[31]

Tolerance of Ambiguity. Tolerance of ambiguity is a mental skill worth developing for the strategic leader in the long-haul. The strategic leader can ill afford to be upset by the ambiguous cues of complex, confusing issues. Appropriate tolerance for ambiguity enables the strategic leader to maintain focus and to require appropriate levels of clarity and ground truth from his staff. Relentless pursuit of clarity and facts can be detrimental to organizational process. Leaders must be sensitive to what can be clarified and what cannot -- and move forward from there.

Relative comfort with ambiguous situations is important for the leader's health and that of his people. Excitement and

aggressive leader behavior is not likely to make a situation less ambiguous. Strategic leaders may enjoy their existence and benefit most from their staffs when they develop high tolerance for ambiguity.

Boldness. Boldness and risk-taking are key to strategic decisions since the decisions are often taken before information is available for a low-risk decision. It takes refined judgment and courage to take bold strategic action. Boldness is the ability to take a dramatic step that is unexpected in the normal evolution of events. A feasible gain that is much larger in proportion should offset the risk of failure.

The economic and cultural change in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe set in motion by Mikhail Gorbachev is an excellent example of strategic boldness. Gorbachev followed his vision and instinct, at risk, not knowing all the events he would set in motion. He sensed that the long-term outcome would be more desirable if he did not proceed along the path of his predecessors. Clausewitz describes boldness that is moderated by other conceptual competencies addressed elsewhere in this discussion:

> The higher up the chain of command, the greater is the need for boldness to be supported by a reflective mind, so that boldness does not degenerate into purposeless bursts of blind passion...[32]the inquiring rather than the creative mind, the comprehensive rather than the specialized approach, the calm rather than the excitable head to which in war we would choose to entrust the fate of our brothers and children, and the safety and honor of our country.[33]

The Cold Warrior nature of the WW II Republican mainstream

was conservative. Bold change in national security design and policy was not their agenda. Boldness was the Democrats' agenda -- so much so that the WW II Democrats were excluded from the campaign process to increase the New Democrat probability of victory. The Democrat *risk* is failure economically, politically, and militarily. However, the voters saw the Republican platform as the *path* to economic and domestic failure with recovery the less likely outcome.

Tenacity. Persistence[34] or tenacity[35] and intellectual stamina[36] are interrelated emotional competencies. Strategic leader tenacity is unique in that it enables sustained vision while hundreds of factors press for a course adjustment or a wholesale change in direction. This is not stubbornness or obstinacy but rather the strength of one's convictions to follow the path suggested by his intuition.[37] The strategic leader must be flexible enough to accept appropriate change and stolid enough to reject inappropriate change. He exists in a decision environment that routinely forces him to choose from among undesirable courses. His staff and advisors will have handled the easier decisions.[38]

In the rapidly changing international and domestic political landscapes, it will take considerable intellectual stamina to handle the series of fits and starts of endangered or failed strategies. Policy decisions may become obsolete very quickly due to unanticipated changes in the situation. Information will always be imperfect and often wrong. The tendency will be to

capitulate to the deluge. The requirement of the strategic leader is to give order and meaning to the confusion. This will take tenacity and intellectual stamina.

Technical Competencies

Although the requirement for strategic leader technical competence may decrease because of the breadth of responsibility, there are technical skills unique to strategic leadership. First is politics which plays significantly in the presidential decisionmaking and national security strategy section of this study.

Politics. Understanding the interdepartmental process in national security and the interaction with the legislature is fundamental. Political incompetence and inability to influence governmental decisions may be the flaw that alone can make a strategic leader ineffective. Most "means" for the strategic leader's "ends and ways" of strategy are subject to the approval and consensus between the executive and the Congress.[39] Knowing which professional staff members, cabinet officers, deputies, assistants, and members of congress support and oppose ideas is key. Influencing them is a vital responsibility of the strategic leader. Balanced argument of national security requirements, benefits, costs, risks and articulating second-order effects are essential skills in the political arena. This is politics, the process by which government operates. It serves every purpose if the strategic leader understands it and can operate within it. President Clinton's competence is apparent in the grudging

respect of Republican strategist Ed Rollins, "[Clinton] is as formidable a political figure as I've seen in my lifetime."[40]

Underlying the elected and appointed representation in government politics are bedrock societal values and historical precedent. Leader awareness of these and interaction with society through the media affects indirectly the way the congressional leadership responds to presidential strategy.

Organizational Culture. There is a culture within the institution and organization of the strategic leader also. Culture derives from member beliefs about what the organization stands for and expects of them as well as their expectations of other members. This determines the criteria for good standing in the organization and the benefit of all. Values are organizational statements of what is important. Critical here is the relationship between stated values and operating values. Strategic leaders must understand the feedback mechanisms that tell them that doctrines, policies, procedures, rules, and actual behaviors are consistent with the stated values. If the stated and operating correspond, they will more likely embed in the culture. Obviously the culture must meet the needs of the individuals as well as produce for the institution and organization.

Strategy. No study of strategic leader competencies is complete without addressing strategy. Must the strategic leader be a strategist? The answer is probably yes. However a strategist is not necessarily a leader. The study of strategy,

the ability to discuss its finer points, and to quote extensively from the literature is an academic pursuit. Scholars are better at this than strategic leaders are. The leader's strategic acumen must be in balance with other more important leadership competencies.

Diverse experience complemented by success in the various endeavors profiles most leaders who reach the top.[41] The strategic leader will have strategists on his staff as he may have served as a strategist along the way. As the leader, he will formulate and articulate strategic aims and key concepts -- the vision. This alone requires a knowledge of strategy appropriate to the leader.

Interpersonal Competencies

The environment moderates the interpersonal competencies unique to strategic leaders. Strategic leaders manage the environment, shaping it where they can and accommodating it where they cannot. Regarding their own organizations, they influence climate and culture to create a fertile environment for initiative and productivity.

Consensus Building. Consensus building, negotiating, persuading, and problem solving are communications skills based in individual vision, frame of reference, and cognitive complexity. Communications competencies require political insight. Values in the political culture are fluid because of underlying constituents' motives; they vary. External to their organization, strategic leaders build consensus among the

decisionmakers in the legislative and executive branches of government. They negotiate the ends, ways, and means of their strategy.

In alliances presidents exercise similar indirect leadership to achieve unity of effort. Even within large pure organizations, collective decisions and consensus gain greater commitment and understanding among subordinates. It is good to remember that members of the president's inner circle are strategic leaders and often influence large domains of their own.

Public Speaking and Writing. External to the organization, the strategic leader communicates with the government and constituents by writing for publication and speaking publicly. Public speaking is both in person and on television. It may be spontaneous or from prepared text. Speech and text organization and delivery must articulate the vision and strategy and be acceptable to the audience. This requires a clarity of thought, direction, and process necessary to elicit adequate support. The leader must anticipate the ever-present critics and decide whom he can persuade. The media will often take spoken and written remarks out of context. To prevent out-of-context contradictions, communications must be consistent and robust. This is a considerable challenge when dealing in a vague, uncertain environment. President Reagan enjoyed the mantel of "Great Communicator." President Clinton is fast approaching the same credential.

Climate Setting. The strategic leader must set open, two-

way communication within his organization. He must be approachable. This enables the strategic leader to read, hear, and sense the organization as he speaks, writes, and acts to affect culture, climate, process, and productivity. Such organizational communication comes from a delicate balance of accessibility to the executive and screening out of noise and distractors in the process. The strategic leader must tailor the process to complement his style and capability. The communications process is very personal. This will be addressed in detail in the presidential decisionmaking section of this study. Whether the president acts as a magistrate or activist in collective decisionmaking sets the climate and affects the quality of presidential decisions.

Some presidents demand and use unfiltered information and alternatives. As activists, they conduct the collective problem solving and policy formulation themselves. Others who want staffs to screen specious information and present them with a decision and action plan are magistrates. Styles vary within this range. Important in all styles, however, is how the staff and advisors feel about their existence in the organization. Do they feel valuable to the organization? Are they treated with dignity and held in high esteem? A hot media topic is the Clinton administration's reported shoddy treatment of military advisors. This guarantees the performance of military advisors will decline from the high performance America enjoyed when those same military leaders were held in high esteem by the

administration.

Those who advise strategic leaders must experience a certain freedom of thought, a sense of value to the leader and organization. Advisors should enjoy job satisfaction, appropriate work-load, and pleasing physical and social surroundings. The leader creates this. He invests trust, responsibility, authority, freedom of thought, and his vision. Such investment returns ten-fold to the strategic leader who has selected the correct people in whom to invest.

Strategic leaders know how to give credit. They not only tolerate genius, they reward it. This is not an idle concern. Many executives still serve their own ego first by taking credit for work by a subordinate. Tnis serves no purpose since the strategic leader has arrived professionally. Organizational performance speaks for itself.

It is best for the leader to accept personal blame for organizational mistakes. His first instinct when mistakes are made should not be to blame someone. He simply keeps personal failures between himself and the person who made the mistake. On the other hand, when great achievements are made, his first instinct should be to reward people who were responsible. This relates back to climate. Presidents must balance public perceptions carefully in this regard. A president will pay a heavy political price if the public views him as "screwing up weekly." So he must take care in public acceptance of fault unless it is clear that is the best strategy. Each mistake by

the administration that is news worthy must be handled on a case-by-case basis regarding where blame is accepted. There are plenty of subordinate cabinet members who can take the heat without expending the political capital lost when the president takes the heat personally. This reminds us again of the major role political savvy plays in presidential leadership.

This section has examined a number of cognitive and emotional conceptual strategic leader competencies. To a lesser degree technical and interpersonal competencies were examined. Strategic leadership is uniquely challenging, especially presidential leadership. The world expects supreme competence from the President of the United States. But it is worth remembering that he does not govern alone. The president gets a great deal of help. He in turn affects the quality of advice in the way he operates. People are his greatest resource in the execution of the presidency. Jomini describes the importance of advisors and how they interact with the strategic leader's personal competence in his view of generalship 150 years ago. The ideas apply to the presidency today.

> A general thoroughly instructed in the theory of war but not possessed of military *coup-d'oeil*, coolness, and skill, may make an excellent strategic plan and be entirely unable to apply the rules of tactics in presence of an enemy. His projects will not be successfully carried out, his defeat will be probable. If he be a man of character he will be able to diminish the evil results of his failure, but if he lose his wits he will lose his army.
>
> The same general may, on the other hand, be at once a good tactician and strategist, and have made all the arrangements for gaining a victory that his means will permit. In this case, if he be only moderately

> seconded by his troops and subordinate officers, he will probably gain a decided victory. If, however, his troops have neither discipline nor courage and his subordinate officers envy and deceive him, he will undoubtedly see his fine hopes fade away; his admirable combinations can only diminish the disasters of an almost unavoidable defeat.[42]

The loyalty of subordinates created by interpersonal competency of presidents combined with their conceptual, emotional, and technical competence may yield productive national leadership. A cool head and retention of intellect under pressure for the long haul is what America requires of a president. The next section of this study examines presidential decisionmaking which embodies a number of the competencies examined in this section. Additional aspects of presidential decisionmaking reveal personal, organizational, and process impediments that may detract from the quality and timeliness of presidential decisions.

## III. PRESIDENTIAL DECISIONMAKING

> Twice in recent American history, great crises propelled Presidents to restructure the government. In 1933, facing a deep economic depression, Franklin Roosevelt began a far-reaching reform of our domestic agencies. In 1947, confronting a new challenge from abroad, Harry Truman carried out an historic reorganization of our national security structure. As in 1933 and 1947, new circumstances and new policies require new machinery... if we wish to compete in the new global economy and deal effectively with other "new priorities," reorganizing the government for the post-Cold War world is a necessity, not a luxury.[43]

This section builds on strategic leader competencies and addresses additional aspects that affect presidential decisionmaking in national security matters. Politics, advisors, and the Congress are part of presidential decisionmaking. They both assist and hamper the process. The primary group of presidential advisors affecting this study are National Security Council members and staff. Domestic, foreign, and bureaucratic politics make the president's situation unique. Politics are interpreted and exercised by the political individuals who advise the president. Although this discussion does not propose broad government reorganization, it does address the president's national security staff organization. The organization of this staff, the people the president appoints to key positions, the issues they raise, and the priority they give those issues fundamentally affect the national security agenda. This discussion illustrates two major points. First, that talented people in more than sufficient numbers advise the president. This maximizes the potential for high quality presidential

decisions. Second, the impediments to high quality decisions originate with those same people because of the relatively crude process by which advice and collective decisions are made.

In the election year theme, this section examines how President Clinton approaches decisionmaking and whom he appoints to advise him. Each appointee comes to the administration with a personal history that translates into biases and tendencies. Of course certain effects by members of The Congress figure significantly in presidential decisionmaking. Examples of recent presidents and their advisors backdrop the policy process of the still emerging Clinton administration.

The decisions that go before the president are world-class, exceedingly complex, and every option has severe negative aspects. If government is operating properly, all presidential decisions will be a choice among alternatives which have serious negative effects on some foreign or domestic people. For example, what is good for Israeli security tends to be bad for many of oil-producing Arab friends -- or at least it is perceived as such.[44] Presidents only make hard decisions. In general, easy decisions will be made by lesser officials.

For this study, presidents either make policy decisions that follow or establish national security strategy in a protracted sense, or they make crisis decisions. Although crisis decisionmaking is interesting, each crisis is unique regarding the region, issues, and governments involved. Distilling universal principles that translate to improved strategic policy

seems rare.[45] When an issue is boiling over, intense issue-based, high-level pragmatic participation will resolve the crisis. Presidents excel in crises because the process usually gets the full attention, experience, and intellectual prowess of the president, involved cabinet members, members of Congress, and key principle appointees. Collectively, they focus themselves and departmental resources in resolving the situation. If the president could spread governmental crisis resolution power and energy over national security strategy formulation, crises may become smaller and fewer while U.S. long-term interests may be prosecuted more effectively. The nation may be better served by the idea that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Therefore this study tends toward how the president, his advisors, and government formulate long-term national security strategy rather than how they will deal with crises.

The definition of national security has evolved since it was coined just after World War II. The definition for the purpose of this study synthesizes aspects from Shoemaker's study of the National Security Council (NSC): "... a decisional discipline ... an overarching, interdisciplinary paradigm embracing elements and responsibilities of a number of departments ... to protect the United States from major threats to our territorial, political, or economic well-being ... integrating and coordinating defense, foreign, international economic, and intelligence policies and procedures."[46] Dominated by defense and foreign policy over the years, economic policy has become an

increasingly important factor in the last decade.

Presidential decisionmaking in national security has been studied extensively and this study does not intend to add to that body of knowledge. Instead, the literature provides a lens to view the 1992 presidential election and emerging Clinton administration. Alexander George's book on presidential decisionmaking deals in the psychological, political, and bureaucratic disciplines. This is particularly important because the election reflected a generational clash between the baby-boomers defined by young adulthood during the Vietnam years and the children of the Great Depression who came of age in WW II. The reins of government have passed to the children of those who have held power for 32 years. Democratic government should reflect the transformation of the national culture which provides the domestic and international political playing field and rules of the game.

The charter of George's study of presidential decisionmaking dissects the nature of the problem.

> Recent work in several disciplines provides new insight into the tendencies of personal and bureaucratic factors (and in the case of crises, physiological and additional psychic factors) to distort the judgement of decision makers. Drawing on recent work in the political, behavioral and psychological sciences, this study would address two questions: (1) to what extent are current organizational, procedural and staff arrangements unnecessarily vulnerable to such pressures; (2) what alternative arrangements might either shield decisionmakers from such pressures or open their deliberations to others less likely to be affected by them?[47]

Figure 3 shows the "...three competing desiderata that impinge in varying degrees on presidential decisionmaking."[48]

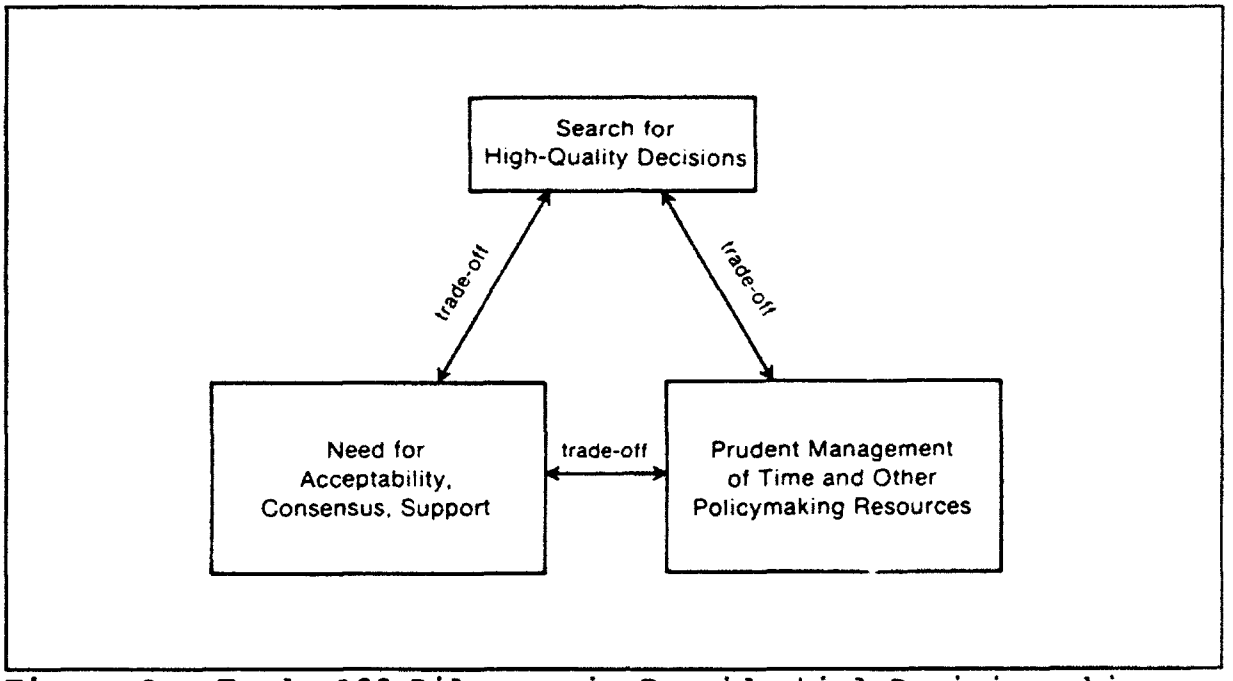



**Figure 3.** Trade-Off Dilemmas in Presidential Decisionmaking

George states that the number one criterion of quality is that a decision maximize national interest at acceptable cost and risk. He goes on to say that the concept of national interests has serious limitations and that a president's criteria, whether he knows it or not, includes:

- satisfy or frustrate his personal values
- provide an outlet for expressing deep-seated motives and impulses
- obtain approval or disapproval from persons who are significant figures in his life
- enhance or damage his self-esteem
- advance or set back his career prospects
- strengthen or weaken his political and bureaucratic resources[49]

These are personal motives and vary considerably between individuals. Below are additional challenges facing President

Clinton.

- elected by less than a majority

- early involvement in significant moral issues (military homosexual ban)

- ongoing combat operations by U.S. forces

- the first Democratic Party president in twelve years

- the first president in his generation

- significant geo-political turbulence with multiple hot spots

- significant domestic economic and social strife

- lack of credibility and moral authority in role of "commander-in-chief of the armed forces"

All of this affects political processes. Organizational decisionmaking literature does not encompass the powerful effects of foreign, domestic, and bureaucratic politics on presidential decisionmaking.[50] It follows that politics of all types is first among the critical factors making presidential decisionmaking imprecise and highly subjective.

Politics

> The problems of public policy...have no definite formulation or stopping rule to tell the problem solver when he has a solution. Moreover, a proposed solution is not true or false but good or bad. There may be neither an immediate nor even an ultimate test of a solution -- the set of potential solutions may seem endless; every problem is essentially unique and is a symptom of another problem. Even for comparatively simple problems...there is not a solution but a resolution -- and this must rely on political judgment.[51]

Contrasting the political process with the military process highlights the changeable and sometimes slippery character of politics -- slippery in the conceptual and not pejorative sense.

Moreover, the military element of national power, if not predominant, provides the foundation and final stand for foreign policy. There comes a natural rift when political and military elements of policy interact. This is particularly salient in the 1990's when the military element of U.S. power is deemphasized relative to the economic element. Politics is the brokering of values in a polity until there is consensus on the value.[52] "Brokering of values" is an idea that comes very late if ever in the mind of professional military people. Military officers who ascend to national prominence are virtually all from the twenty percent of the military which specializes in direct combat rather than support. That group of officers holds values and ethics as the touchstone of the profession for leading in the terror and confusion of combat. Values are not negotiable in the military. However those values take on different importance in the context of national political concerns. In spite of the decades spent imbuing the military with immutable values and principles that pull the institution through hard times, values in society evolve. Military advice to the president should balance conservative, value-based defense positions with an understanding of domestic political and economic realities that are more important to national security than the readiness and force structure of the military. Military advisors can be sensitive to political matters and understand them without becoming politicized. To illustrate, consider the Weinberger Doctrine, as it has become known in military circles.

Weinberger prescribes precise conditions for the use of military force.[53] It is an excellent heuristic and is useful to create political consensus.[54] But it is neither doctrine nor policy. Politics and policy, often on an issue-by-issue basis will determine the appropriateness of force. Rules will not. This should be the first lesson of strategic thinking for an officer. Look at each of the Weinberger criteria. Each is politically negotiable in every aspect. Pragmatism, ideology, the Constitution, the Bible, a treaty and many other sources may provide the argument against the tenets of the Weinberger Doctrine.

If values are negotiable in politics, whom or what do politicians serve and by what criteria do they make decisions? In fact, they serve the Constitution and constituents and not necessarily in that order. The major underlying value in the Constitution is that elected politicians will be of, by, and for the people. It follows then, as society's values evolve so go the politicians. U.S. elected officials need not distinguish between constituents and the Constitution. On the contrary, they variously lead or are led by the people hopefully with other high American values to guide them. Furthermore, if a politician does not pursue his constituents' interests, his time in office may be short -- whether or not those interests are for the general good of the U.S. Consequently, politicians, by necessity and constitutional design are guided by the "political windsock" rather than some "compass" of enduring national values and

interests. They are also influenced more by politics than by technical analysis.[55] The politics in the Congress associated with Base Realignment and Closure stands as an excellent example. In direct conflict are needed federal defense budget cuts and the loss of jobs and revenue in congressional districts. The political tendency is to waste federal money to meet the needs of constituents.

Consider also the role presidential elections play in policy formulation. The current National Security Strategy document was scheduled to be released in August 1992. It is critical that such a document be published on time for it sets the parameters of many other department strategies and programs. President Bush delayed publication of the strategy until after the presidential elections because he did not want the opposition to have a written strategy document to pick apart, quote out of context, and use against him.[56] This seems selfish and petty. But consider such a choice relative to winning the election and prosecuting the party strategy for the betterment of America for the next four years. By comparison, slipping publication of the strategy was politically wise.

When playing domestic policy against foreign policy, consider the basis on which voters elect government officials. Candidates promise to use government to citizens' collective benefit. The domestic agenda is preeminent and foreign policy is only important to the extent it supports domestic aims. If a national leader pursues foreign policy that either does not

enhance the domestic situation or if he cannot articulate how the policy helps us, he is probably advocating the wrong policy.[57]

The so-called information revolution and media have increased literacy, education, and have made governments more accountable to the people -- especially in the open democratic and informationally rich society of the U.S. Sarkesian points out that during the 80's, public opinion emerged as a major force on the presidents.

> ...public opinion is expressed... in a growing array of direct and indirect formats, particularly polls. Politicians, carefully attuned to shifts in public opinion as communicated directly to them via the poll results and by a more aggressive press -- which in itself was a key component of the new network of constraints -- put heavy pressure on the nation's chief political figure to accommodate all demands.[58]

Prompt response to public, media, congressional, and other pressures by the executive has given "the appearance of

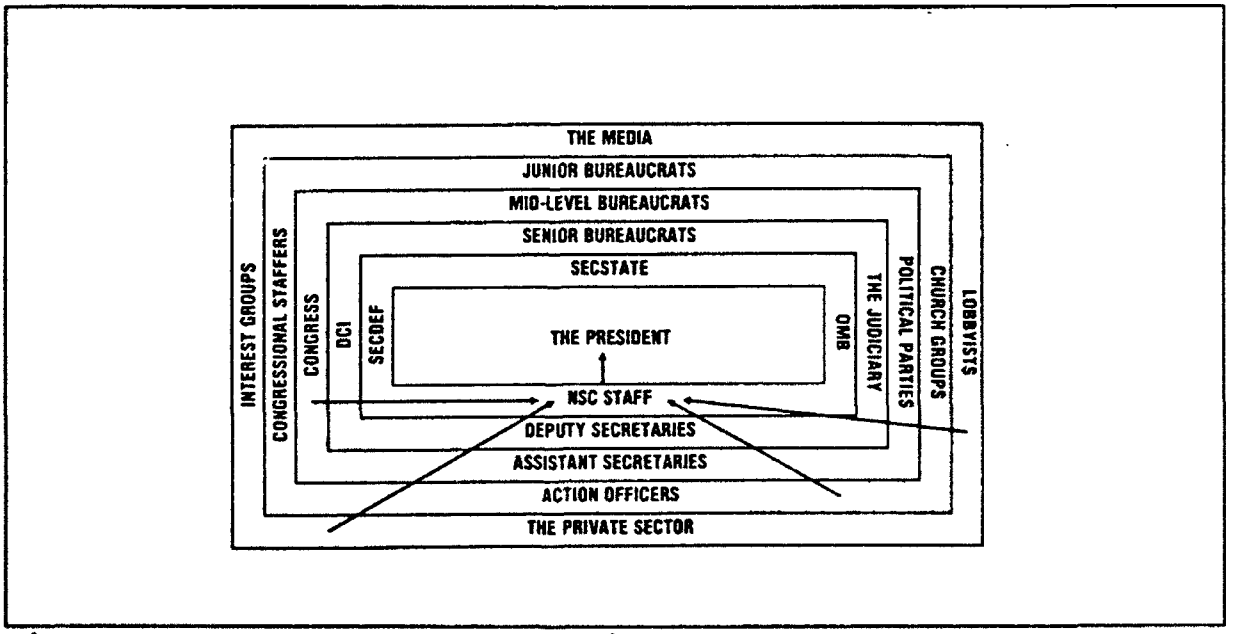



**Figure 4.** NSC Staff as a Conduit

ambivalent oscillations back and forth in some sort of schizoid fashion."[59] Figure 4 illustrates some of the sources of political pressure that the president and his staff must consider and balance when making policy decisions.[60]

To sum up, politics sets presidential decisionmaking in a class of by itself. Every decision the president makes takes into account political variables that mean different things to constituents, advisors, foreign governments, the Congress, and the president himself based on each perspective and value system. Issues are subject to interpretation. The political, military, and economic elements of national power provide the framework within which instruments of policy compete to produce national action. Advisors champion those instruments, interpret events, persuade by power of reputation, reason, and political influence to present the president with alternatives from which he must select one. The president's competence as a strategic decisionmaker determines the degree to which advice and other relevant factors affect his decisions. He is almost never neutral on an issue which interacts with advice he receives.

Decisionmaking Process

Because of the complex nature of presidential decisionmaking, it is supported by a White House Staff highly skilled not only in politics, but in international economics, security, relations, or law. Given a certain minimum level of experience, professionals can be expected to master bureaucratic processes that support presidential decisionmaking. Therefore,

the quality of the people for the president's staff is of the utmost importance in decision support to the president. People are more important than process. Process conforms to the contours of the people. Even so, processes that evolve are often unsophisticated, as this examination shows, when compared to collective problem solving and decisionmaking processes that have been developed in industrial and organizational psychology.

Decisionmaking should accomplish certain tasks, but equally important is the *time* for the decision. Timing and sequencing of decisions with other decisions affects decision quality. Better a well-timed mediocre decision than a right ill-timed one. The recognition of emerging republics in former Yugoslavia by the U.S. and European nations and alliances highlight the role of timing.[61] It could be that while the president waited for greater situational clarity before assisting in a peaceful breakup of the region, hostilities erupted obviating diplomatic processes that may have been effective.

Decisionmaking should accomplish the below listed tasks. Italicized key words emphasize the operative aspects of the task and highlight the similarity of this process with military staff planning and the scientific method.

> 1. Ensure that *sufficient information about the situation* at hand is obtained and that it is analyzed adequately so that it provides policymakers with an incisive and valid diagnosis of the problem.
>
> 2. Facilitate *consideration* of all the major *values and interests* affected by the policy issue at hand. Thus, the initial objectives established to guide development and appraisal of options should be examined to determine whether they express adequately the values

and interests imbedded in the problem and, if necessary, *objectives and goals should be formulated.*

3. Assure a *search* for a relatively *wide range of options* and a reasonably thorough *evaluation of expected consequences* of each. The *possible* costs and *risks* of an option as well as its expected or hoped for benefits should be carefully assessed; uncertainties affecting these calculations should be identified, analyzed, and taken into account before determining the preferred course of action.

4. Provide for careful *consideration of the problems that may arise* in *implementing* the *options* under consideration; such evaluations should be taken into account in weighing the attractiveness of the options.

5. Maintain *receptivity* to indications *that current policies are not working out* well, and cultivate an ability to learn from experience.[62]

These tasks come from Alexander George's book on presidential decisionmaking. These same tasks phrased differently comprise a military staff study, the soldier's outline of the scientific method. It is the political aspect of such terms as *values, interests, options, consequences, and policies* in George's tasks that sets presidential decisionmaking apart.

A serving member of the NSC Staff tells in her own words how policy formulation was done for President Bush. The consistency with Dr. George's concepts is really quite striking.

> First determine what the requirements for an outcome are, smoke out all aspects of the problem, not only substantive but administrative, timing, sequencing with other decisions, and intensity of its presentation. There is often no sure standard to judge decision quality. When confronting a problem, there are invariably three or four options to pursue. Professional staffers generate options from their knowledge and experience. Problem resolution will be done by marshalling a range of resources. All options may answer the mail. Which you recommend is less a

function of process than of domestic political reality.

> Presenting a full range of options to the president is dysfunctional. Neither is it useful for everyone to give their opinion all of the time. It is important to determine who should express his view and at what level. Scowcroft says, "You get your arms around what you can get your arms around. Keep things presidential on the NSC Staff." Constraints and criteria emerge as the issue is being studied and are often conditional on a particular problem at a particular time. Policy is very much a quest of what is happening today.[63]

The issue orientation apparent in the above staff member's approach was echoed by two other members of the NSC staff from the Reagan-Bush years. One individual described this pragmatic approach as the way things are and not necessarily as they should be. However, he did not seem disturbed by that reality. The third was clearly frustrated that policy decisions tended to be disconnected from one another, from the national security strategy, and from broad, rigorous staffing across the NSC staff and the departments of the executive branch.

> The NSC staff is gatekeeper for all of the issues that flow toward the White House. The staff is expected to filter, evaluate, and elevate issues. There are no filters between the 40 or so NSC professional staff and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (APNSA) Scowcroft. This encourages bold, analytical, well thought-out advice to the president rather than watered-down committee consensus. We are the president's personal staff.

Somewhere in the executive policy formulation process between interdepartmental coordination and one-on-one NSC staff advice to the president are a range of collective processes. Each process produces advice that is measured by quality and speed. High quality advice tends to develop more slowly than

poor advice but not always. Next under is a discussion of the tendencies of high-level collective decisionmaking processes Note that they often fail to harness the collective potential of the group.

Traditional Executive Decisionmaking

> The traditional, and in many respects the simplest, method of using a group of experts to arrive at a judgment is to conduct a *round-table* discussion among them, having them eventually agree on a group position...the resulting judgment is very likely to be a compromise between divergent views often arrived at under the influence of certain psychological factors, such as specious persuasion by the member with the greatest supposed authority or merely the loudest voice, a reluctance by certain of the participants to abandon positions that they might have taken publicly, and the bandwagon effect of a majority opinion . . . Experimenters have shown that committee consensus may be an effective way to get a group position, but the judgments reached tend to be inferior to group judgments reached in other ways.[64]

To illustrate the suppressive forces possible when building consensus, consider a foreign policy consensus building session in the Nixon White House with Henry Kissinger as a participant; or with Alexander Haig in the Reagan administration. Kissinger and Haig are not reputed to embrace competing assertions and technical aspects of others' arguments. They dominate a collective process if not by intellect, knowledge, and experience then by personal power and authority vested in them by the president.

One organizational psychology method of reaching group judgments that generally exceed collated individual judgments is the Delphi technique. Originally done by written questionnaire and now by interactive computer, this iterative process enables

the exchange and evaluation of ideas without the psychological drawbacks of unstructured face-to-face confrontation.[65] It tends to maximize the quality and substance of solutions while minimizing socio-emotional impediments. In other words, by exchanging information among high quality participants, more views are generated and considered. They share the burden of generating and evaluating alternatives and tend to consider more aspects of a problem in more sophisticated ways. The iterative process tends to elevate the process to very high levels, quickly to produce high quality results.

The problem is that people of high authority do not use these techniques. They in fact have round-table discussions. People in positions of great power do not have time to role up their sleeves and participate in a Delphi session. They do have time to be briefed by a trusted advisor, gain the consensus of a few more advisors and then decide. This is primitive but is the way things are done. This does not harness the collective potential of the talent at the top of government. Crisis decisionmaking tends to be better because the exigencies of the situation suppress political and personal agendas. Long-term strategy formulation suffers the most because obvious consequences do not loom over the process. Therefore synergy tends to decrease.

An interesting and unfortunate by-product of crisis decisionmaking is that the national security principals get the exercise while deputies and staffs deal with non-crisis issues.

In fact, the national security strategy document is written and coordinated by an NSC professional staff member. The document does not receive any ratification process. The NSC principals did not even convene to discuss and approve the 1991 and the 1992 document. The more crises, the less principals can deal with strategy formulation which increases the likelihood of crises. Clearly, administrations that can formulate and prosecute viable strategy and decrease the incidence of crisis management are superior at the art of governance.

Although round-table, collective decisions tend to be of lower quality than those reached by more sophisticated means, consensus of another type -- that between the president and the Congress -- is the currency of national decisions for coherent action in the U.S. government.[66] Without consensus, given constitutional separation of power, a presidential decision is declarative. It is recognized as such by foreign governments and American constituents and carries little weight until both the president and the Congress gain consensus. National security policy is a shared responsibility and deemed so by the framers of the Constitution. The tendencies of the Congress as communicated to the president and vice versa have terrific influence on the president's decisions. Virtually every department of the executive has a talented legislative liaison staff to facilitate the influence exchange process with the Congress.

Advisory Malfunctions

Beyond the drawbacks of round-table consensus building,

other malfunctions plague the collective decision and advisory processes. It is apparent that each can be guarded against by a skilled collective process facilitator, but government does not expend the resources to do so. And so, decision quality tends to be lower than necessary:

> 1. When a decisionmaker and his advisers *agree too readily* on the nature of the problem facing them and on a response to it.
>
> 2. When advisers and policy advocates take different positions and debate them before the executive but their *disagreements to not cover the full range of relevant hypotheses* and alternative options.
>
> 3. When there is *no advocate for unpopular policy* option.
>
> 4. When advisers to the executive thrash out their disagreements over policy without the executive's knowledge and confront him with a *unanimous recommendation*.
>
> 5. When advisers agree privately among themselves that the executive ought to face up to a difficult decision, but *no one is willing to alert him* to the need to do so.
>
> 6. When the executive, faced with an important problem to decide, is dependent upon a *single channel of information*.
>
> 7. When the *key assumptions* and premises of a plan which the executive is asked to adopt have been *evaluated only by advocates* of that option.
>
> 8. When the executive asks advisers for their opinions on preferred course of action but does not request a *qualified group to examine* more carefully the *negative judgment offered* by one or more advisers.
>
> 9. When the executive is *impressed by the consensus* among his advisers on behalf of a particular option but *fails to ascertain how firm the consensus is, how it was achieved, and whether it is justified.*[67]

In this section are views of advisors to the national security process in the Bush administration. It is interesting to note a number of malfunctions by the above criteria. This is

not to denigrate or poke fun at an administration. Every administration has process problems and often much more. The Bush administration will certainly be treated favorably by history for the foreign policy successes it forged in four short years. The purpose is to demonstrate that even with universally high quality people, if process is ignored or over-simplified, decision quality may suffer. A close advisor to a member of the NSC deputies made the following observations:

> The administration moved very slowly. They claimed it was in pursuit of consensus but what they really wanted was *unanimity* before they went to the president. If they could not work out a position, they would send it back down to the departments rather than turning the decision over to the president to make the tough choice. The system sat on issues on which they could not agree rather than simply giving it to the president for decision. Burning issues must elevate to the highest level quickly if they are to be resolved efficiently. In this administration, people do not want to argue in front of the president. They are afraid to step on anybody's toes.
>
> We do not tend to bring things to the table and hammer them out unless there is a crisis. There is plenty of talent in Washington to formulate policy but we do it well only in the eleventh hour.
>
> I feel the principals hold back. Nobody lets their subordinates play all the cards. They hold the trump cards until an NSC meeting with the president if its a controversial subject. If it's boiling over, decisions will be made, well, efficiently, with NSC principals. Principles are often ahead of the process while the deputies are working side issues.[68]

A number of malfunctions in the decisionmaking process appear in the above passage. The tendency for unanimity creates terrific pressure to either dilute solutions to the lowest common denominator or to pressure dissenters to acquiesce rather than prolong debate. Clearly such pressure tends to suppress

unpopular policy options or those held by advisors who lack influence in the process. That President Bush apparently preferred unanimous recommendations reinforced low rigor and analysis of competing alternatives in the advice process. And finally, as will be further supported, by not challenging unanimous recommendations the President may have tended to confuse consensus with correctness.

Clinton Decisionmaking Process

President Clinton follows an impressive foreign policy record by the Bush administration. Some would say that Bush is no longer in office because he did not articulate a domestic agenda; and that he did not show how his foreign policy successes enhanced America. Clinton ran on the domestic agenda and is focusing on it "like a laser." The Commission on Governmental Reform recommended to President-elect Clinton how to organize the executive branch of government. Included was advice on where policy should be formulated and which duties the president's personal staff should not do. Key excerpts from the commission's advice follow:

> - Determine priorities and organization *before* choosing your senior team so that their personalities, styles, and values are compatible with yours.
>
> - Make clear that the White House will be your Administration's center for strategic planning and policy formulation.
>
> - Establish and preside over three co-equal Councils -- the National Security Council, the Economic Council, and the Domestic Council.
>
> - Establish several high-level, bipartisan Commissions, to recommend how certain areas of government should be

restructured.

- Your staff should not cross the fine line between strategy and implementation, between policy formulation and operations.

President Clinton's closest advisors are on board with this advice. President Clinton has in fact created the National Economic Council (NEC) but not the Domestic Council. Presumably the NEC has assumed domestic issues. In the Carter and Reagan administrations, the president intended his Secretary of State to formulate policy but the process eventually migrated to the NSC at the White House. President Clinton similarly to Richard Nixon, intends for the White House to formulate policy from the inauguration forward.[69] Keeping his staff out of policy implementation and operations will prevent executive abuse and loss of control associated with the Watergate and Iran-Contra affairs. During transition, NSC staff members and advisors provided first impressions of President Clinton's decisionmaking style.

> He will not make an uninformed decision. He seeks out advice, he listens, he's a quick study, a smart guy. Gore and Aspin are smart too. There is no big void. Knowledge in the background is not the hard part because there are plenty of brains in town. The problem is gathering, elevating, and integrating issues. We may see things happening faster with the Clinton administration.[70]

> Clinton is relaxed, comfortable, walks around, likes dialogue, he can focus, wants people to be the devil's advocate, wants different views, wants more discussion. Reagan was very protected and that carried over to Bush.[71]

> There will be no repeat of Carter's going it alone as a Washington outsider or Brzezinski-Vance battles over competing ideologies between Christopher and Lake.

> Expect more agreement and collegial climate. Lake and Burger are the thinkers, relative to Christopher.[72]
>
> Clinton's social skills and charisma will not produce a "Bay of Pigs" type fiasco. That resulted from a misunderstanding of how decisions are made. That idea [the Bay of Pigs invasion] was generated at CIA at the end of the Eisenhower administration which had a very structured system good at weeding out bad ideas. Had Eisenhower stayed in office, the Bay of Pigs idea probably would not have gone anywhere. Kennedy wanted to do something, since it was an Eisenhower leftover, it was automatically assessed as probably a good idea. Plus Dulles had been kept on and was running the show at CIA. Eisenhower's NSC system was swept away [as have been the Bush people and records - the system has been basically retained]. A danger is that all new administrations want to do something -- sometimes without sufficient vetting. Yugoslavia is the danger. Fortunately Powell is still the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS). And '93 Democrats are not the '61 Democrats. In sum, a decent national security process has evolved and I expect it to operate similarly with interdepartmental and NSC staff procedures. No huge swing. The APNSA will be less than but equal to the Secretary of State as before.[73]

In addition to the cognitive and emotional competencies of strategic leaders this study addressed earlier, there are other psychological tendencies associated with strategic decisionmaking. Again, few decisionmaking situations are richer than that of President of the United States. Which decisions should be made by the president is determined first by the criteria he sets. His Chief of Staff, National Security Advisor, and Economic Advisor probably have "walk in" clearance to the Oval Office and serve as his gatekeepers. They meter the type and quantity of decisions to him. How formal the setting for decisions varies by president. Next are some personal, individual impediments that further complicate the collective

malfunctions in decisionmaking addressed above.

Individual Impediments to Decisionmaking

People, not organizations, make decisions. People have psychological baggage they bring to the job. The president is advised by his personal staff, his cabinet members, congressional leaders, interest groups, polls, and family members. But he decides. And his decisions include his own motives, values, and analyses based on his life and professional experience. This section examines impediments to decisionmaking and aids to overcome the impediments. Bear in mind there is no substitute for careful study and analyses of each problem; but when the problems arrive by the thousands daily as do the president's, the key to function is choosing which decisions he should take on and then dispatching them adequately and expeditiously.

One major influence on individual decisionmakers is the nature and amount of their governmental experience. For example, Bush and Nixon exemplify federal government and policy experts. Carter, Reagan, and Clinton were state government experts. President Reagan's experience was more valuable as the size of California and the scale of his influence and responsibilities were enormous compared to those of Presidents Carter and Clinton.

Regardless, impediments to decisionmaking on the part of the individual occur when he attempts to make decisions when policy issues are clouded by value complexity or when there is insufficient information to calculate the consequences of

options.[74] These value trade-offs are stressful for the conscientious decisionmaker, so he naturally resorts to some defense mechanisms in order to cope. Presidents laboring under the malaise of thousands of issues may *resolve a value conflict*, at least to their own satisfaction, by devising a course of action that seems to satisfy all of the competing values, either genuinely or in a spurious and illusory way. A second way is to *accept* the value conflict as unavoidable and to make a decision among undesirable options. Finally, the president can *avoid* it by downplaying its importance. Typically, *procrastination* and falsely *bolstering favored alternatives* aid avoidance.[75] Assuming these forces do operate on the president, the quality of advice, its intensity, and timing are critical as mentioned before.

Decision aids also enable the decisionmaker to resolve value conflicts in a constructive way when policy issues are clouded by uncertainty. The aids include:[76]

1. Satisfice or choose the first adequate solution rather than optimize a solution
2. Incrementalism or "muddling through"
3. Consensus rather than mastering the complexity
4. Reliance on historical precedent
5. Reliance on ideology
6. Applying correct strategy and tactics.

By the nature of the decision aids, they each detract from decision quality -- but contribute to making a decision. Considering the number of decisions made in the White House and

that there is always a time to decide, the president may accept lower quality to obtain a decision when timing is critical. In fact, each decision aid when used deftly by the president and his gatekeepers tends to produce high performance overall as a collection of good, timely but not perfect decisions. Next under, each aid is developed in some detail with a brief historical example of its use.

Satisficing is accepting the first satisfactory solution at acceptable cost. This may be used for decisions where a quality requirement is low but also for meeting a timing or sequencing node. When issues are being negotiated, arms control for example, to satisfice often enables agreement on a milestone that enables the next round. General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs negotiations is an example.

Incrementalism is a series of small decisions about components of an issue because no bold solution can be divined. This is due usually to a dynamic and unclear decision situation. Bosnia policy is an example of this not only for the U.S. but for other countries and alliances. As a policy, the president opts for small, positive steps rather than making a bold move because he lacks sufficient understanding of the consequences. Interestingly, both President Clinton and Secretary of Defense Aspin showed aggressive postures during transition. However, Secretary of State Christopher has stated publicly that these things take time and the U.S. should not rush into some precarious policy. The U.S. should allow special envoys to

hammer out peace accords.

Consensus is agreement on a policy alternative -- and not necessarily the optimum or even correct alternative. But politically, agreement is often more important than quality. It enables implementation. Foremost on the domestic agenda is the president's economic plan that will not work if piece-mealed by the Congress. Certainly it could be reworked, studied, and improved. However it is more important that it be implemented if it is acceptable. The Congress must back the President for the program to have any effect. Consensus, not necessarily correctness, is the key to progress.

Ideology is the following of principles when formulating policy under conditions that are either intractable or prohibitively difficult to analyze. Reliance on historical precedent and ideology are similar in that they provide a template of sorts to overlay an issue. Not only does this tend to clarify aspects of the situation, it enables some prediction of decision consequences. The danger is that in trying to hammer a new situation into a similar situation from the past or to make it follow an ideology may distort the issues. Removing the heads of state from South Vietnam and Chile would suggest that doing the same to Panama would be a bad idea. However, the situations were quite different. Although Panama has not recovered as national leaders had hoped, it seems that deposing Noriega achieved U.S. objectives in the region.

Ideology might have enabled a quicker, bolder, and better

solution during the break up of former Yugoslavia. Democratization has become the center piece of U.S. foreign policy but had not crystallized as such until recently. When countries began to seek independence and democratic systems in the Balkans, the U.S. could have supported them on democratic ideology alone -- particularly if that were a well-known policy. When this was recommended by one NSC staffer to a Yugoslavia planner, the response was, "We're not selling oatmeal here."[77] In other words, the NSC planner sought a pragmatic solution which often optimizes the near-term. Whatever policy option the president chose failed to prevent the massacre ongoing in the region. Following an ideological solution may have served U.S. interests more effectively and easily.

Applying correct strategy and tactics, that is, following procedure is often a good fall back when the variables are intractable. In other words "do things right and perhaps the right things will happen." A policy prescription often followed when the U.S. or U.N. is pressuring a nation to change its policy are economic sanctions, diplomatic pursuit of a solution (often satisficing), embargoes, threat of force, and then some surgical use of force. Recent policy in the Balkans and Iraq follow this model.

The danger here again is that mindless application of doctrine or policy without carefully analyzing an issue from all sides may produce a worse situation. In sum, deciding if, when, and how the U.S. should act in response to domestic and

international events consumes the president and his staff. Every decision could have been better. Many events go unnoticed and the U.S. misses opportunities to advance national interests. And some decisions are flat wrong. In each event, decision impediments and aids play into the solution. Outcomes and their historical treatment are the ultimate judgment of the complete collection of a president's decisions.

Although the decision aids above are billed as individual decision aids, the president virtually always gets advice before making a decision. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize the impediments and aids to the decision process.

Personality

The character of the president as a person, or his personality, influences the advice he gets, from whom he gets it, and how he uses it. Personality is defined as an "acquired, relatively enduring, yet dynamic, and unique system of predispositions to psychological and social behavior" that shapes the perceptions and world view of the political actor. Thus, the president's world view "consists of his primary, politically relevant beliefs, particularly his conceptions of social causality, human nature, and the central moral conflicts of the times."[78] It follows that the personality and character of the incumbent also set the tone of the administration and influence key policymakers in their perceptions of the world and what needs to be done.[79]

Personality and character of the policymaker is more likely

to be an important factor when there are a number of conflicting options, with no one particular option dominant. This is also true when relatively new directions are undertaken, or when a consensus is lacking on any particular policy...experience in office and in the real world can change the individual's world views and cause a change in the individual's view of his or her political role...it can also reinforce.[80] When the president acts, be it extemporaneously before the visual media, is quoted in print, interacts with other heads of state in summit, or deals with the Congress, he is affecting policy.

When he does this, he is alone. "A leader's personality is a decisive element in the making of foreign policy...it matters very much, in short, *who* is there at a given moment."[81] Any preparation that has gone before is filtered and expressed by one person, the president. This is important because there are those who say the president really does not have a significant effect on the country because of the separation of powers. They are probably wrong. Only one person can lead in America, the president. Congress cannot by virtue of their huge membership. They do not formulate policy, they evaluate, appropriate, counsel, approve, and disapprove -- but collectively they do not lead. In that regard, the President as an individual plays the central role in policy formulation for the U.S.

Personality Summaries of Recent Presidents.

Before characterizing President Clinton, the view of recent presidential characters and styles sets a basis for comparing and

highlighting individual differences. Each president's choice of national security advisors significantly affected his decisionmaking and governance. Presidents are not elected for expertise in foreign policy but for their leadership style and domestic agenda. They generally depend on experts for national security.[82] The basic management choice for a chief executive is whether to function as a referee and magistrate or as an activist. Magistrates delegate the details of policy formulation to subordinates and their agencies and encourage bureaucratic consensus. Activists foster bureaucratic competition...reserving decisions to themselves. Magistrates were Eisenhower, Ford, and Reagan. Activists were Roosevelt, Kennedy, Nixon, and Carter. Truman and Johnson were blends.[83] The magistrates risk being out of touch of genuinely competing views. The activists risk chaos as competitors try to be heard.

President Nixon felt secure only when he was safe from the preying eyes of the press, the public, Congress, and a variety of other political actors.[84] Richard Nixon was conservative, dignified, stern, proper, a determined fighter, and a decisionmaker with guts to take the flak. He was a courageous risk-taker, political in-fighter and also introverted, shy, ill at ease in public, but comfortable with intimate friends. He minimized contact with others but provided rational decision process with him in position to make the final decision. He was staunchly anti-communist but tempered it with pragmatism. For example, he opened the door to China and sought peace in

Vietnam. The national security policy process functioned like a fiefdom dominated by Henry Kissinger who had been a brilliant Harvard professor.[85]

President Jimmy Carter was morally complex, religious, parochial, and politically naive. His moral purpose divorced him from the realities of politics. He saw a clear distinction between right, wrong, moral, and immoral. He was fiercely loyal and believed in the rationality of the political environment. His sense of confidence and purpose evolved a logical, neat, purposeful national security process structure. He, however, immersed himself in technical details he enjoyed and ran the White House like a neat bureaucracy. He had as his national security assistant Zbigniew Brzezinski, a brilliant Columbia professor. Brzezinski reduced what Kissinger had built but ran it essentially the same. President Carter liked structure but also used informal luncheon discussions. He studied the issues and familiarized himself with details. He often got tied up in small things and individual people could not act. His commitment to human rights was laudatory but did not produce coherent national security policy.[86]

President Ronald Reagan brought powerful actors to Washington. Very conservative, he valued hard work, was a former Roosevelt Democrat, and enjoyed the role of great communicator. His experience as governor gave him a pragmatic outlook to achieve goals. He would articulate his philosophy and policy and leave the details to others. He had an orderly chain of command,

was inflexible (especially after a decision) but could reconcile when convinced of another way. He knew who he was and was at peace with himself. He enjoyed his job. In national security, he downgraded the status of the national security advisor which damaged policy formulation for the first six of his eight years until he installed as his advisor Frank Carlucci and his deputy Colin Powell.[87]

President Bush and His Advisors

Presidents get advice on virtually everything. A study of whom they select to advise them is instrumental to the quality of presidential decisionmaking. It follows that the president is likely to appoint as his closest advisors those whose personality and world view best fit the president's own and are compatible with his style of leadership.[88] Presidents surround themselves with like-minded people but preferably not to the extent that diversity of view, objectivity, and analysis become too narrow. Using the Bay of Pigs example again, insufficient analysis and desire to support the president suppressed informed, dissenting views which allowed a fatally flawed plan to be executed. An example of perhaps too many different-minded advisors may be the number of Democrats President Bush appointed in his administration. President Bush did this to facilitate negotiations between a Republican Executive branch and a Democratic Congress. But the end result was blurred policy focus which hurt executive performance with no apparent payoff in dealing with Congress.[89]

The credibility of an advisor often determines how much he influences the president. Where an advisor or cabinet member has spent his professional career shapes his perception, intellect, and bureaucratic competence. For example, former Secretary of State Schultz knew international economics better than anybody in government. As former secretary of the treasury and professor of economics before that, he could see things in economic terms better than others. He saw the wheels coming off of the USSR before most because he was looking through economic glasses.[90] Such insight in a Secretary of State combined with the high authority of his office enhances policy formulation and implementation. Such sophistication enhances the speed, accuracy, and comprehensiveness of advice and action from a secretary.

What would normally be valuable experience to a high-level advisor can also work against the president. Policy formulation for the former Yugoslavia was strongly affected by Secretary Eagleberger and APNSA Scowcroft. They were not only experts in the region but had tacit, verbal agreements that the break up of the region would be peaceful. These "handshake" agreements produced a "wait and see" policy.[91] The deplorable situation that has resulted suggests more thorough analysis and preventative diplomacy may have been in order.

President Bush would be hard-pressed to know more about such a situation than his assistant for national security and Secretary of State. Suffice it to say that a more rigorous study

of the situation and evaluating all of the options without the overriding influence of powerful and knowledgeable high-level officials may have produced a different policy. But it is this same process and same people that produce the many timely and effective policies of the administration without undo resource expenditure. The key is balancing avoidance and satisficing against thorough analysis to sustain a collection of policy decisions that generally obtain U.S. interests.

Changes that President Bush made in the NSC process when he became president were substantial. A bonafide national security expert in his own right (which Reagan was not), he replaced all but two of the forty NSC professional staffers. The White House became less engaged in the Defense Budget other than to begin trimming it immediately. Scowcroft, in the first weeks of the Bush administration poked a CINC in the chest after he had laid out a plan for new acquisition programs saying, "Don't you know that we are broke?" Thus the tone for cut backs was set. Unlike the Weinberger-Schultz battle of the titans to lead foreign policy Bush had the unequal status of Baker and Cheney in foreign policy -- Baker with the obvious lead. Scowcroft, although the most knowledgeable on the issues, played the role of honest broker and consensus builder. Scowcroft had excellent access and credibility with Bush -- personally and substantively. This narrowed the White House perspective. It was more closed. As such, new issues in the changing geo-political landscape did not fall easily into the structure, e.g., peacekeeping, economy,

trade. Bush advisors tended as a group to be inflexible regarding the changing environment and were still somewhat controlled by the Cold War mentality.[92] Cabinet officers, minus Baker, were more distant than during the Reagan years. Baker added to closeness with his deputy Kimmitt who had worked in the Reagan White House for years.[93]

> James Baker may be Bush's closest friend in the cabinet and his official point man on foreign affairs, but it was Scowcroft with whom Bush daily indulged his fascination with national security issues through long conversation... Scowcroft is an honest broker for the NSC process. He assures that issues are clearly presented to the president; that all reasonable options, together with an analysis of their disadvantages and risks, are brought to his attention; and that the views of the president's other principal advisers are accurately conveyed.[94]

A Scowcroft staffer described more inner workings of his NSC:

> You write a paper for the APNSA or for the president--that's what happens to it. We are not collators who cast up consensus from the bureaucracy. We have our own view. We have a voice. We look out for the president but must be aware of department positions. Regarding the Weinberger Doctrine on committing troops. Sorry, you don't get to choose why we go to war, we get to choose. It may be a prudent strategy but not law. Force is not the final choice. It is more nuance than it is not. At the end of the day it will be Scowcroft, Powell, and Cheney advising Bush who will decide what will happen.[95]

Again, the president decides. This reinforces the notion that President Bush did not use his NSC as a decision forum.

President Clinton

It is too early to assess accurately President Clinton's presidential style and administration. However a biography clarifies President Clinton's personal character and public behavior. Jim Moore's book, Clinton: Young Man in a Hurry

corroborates casual observations of the president since his rise to national prominence.

Intellectually, Clinton's credentials speak for themselves. A Georgetown bachelor's, Oxford Rhodes Scholarship, Yale law degree, and professor of law at the University of Arkansas Law School are indications of substantial intellectual competence. More importantly, Americans have watched him hold forth on numerous and diverse issues during the presidential race. Again, during transition, President-elect Clinton demonstrated a remarkable grasp of both the global issues and details as he conducted his economic summit in January 1993. "For the first time since John Kennedy, we will have a president whose intellectual skills do not distance him from the art of governance, but actually bring him closer."[96] Clinton has been and will continue to be faulted as president. It is unlikely that it will be from an inability to comprehend complex material. Intellectually, he is impressive.

Composure under fire complements President Clinton's intellect as does his boundless energy and high intellectual stamina. He did not waver under withering fire of his draft record, alleged marital infidelity, or pot smoking. Clinton's demonstrations of emotion are almost exclusively in a positive, passionate sense for his values, beliefs, and policies. Compare this with his H. Ross Perot's withdrawal from the race under pressure of the media and his later snits with the same. Perot continues to attack the president personally in his

"infomercials" for his group "United We Stand." Voters saw President Bush make petty personal attacks on Candidate Clinton and Senator Gore by calling them "bozos" and "ozone man." President Bush has also overreacted to hecklers in the crowd during his presidency. If a candidate conducted himself presidentially during the campaign, it was Mr. Clinton. He stayed on the political high ground and conducted himself as a gentleman regardless of the behavior of others. His composure served him well during the campaign and will do so in office. This is not to say he cannot debate and argue. He can. His strength is his grasp and use of the issues while maintaining composure.

During his campaign Governor Clinton gained the reputation of being highly accessible as an executive, identifying well with all types of people, encouraging candor from advisors, and fostering a participative, collegial environment for decisionmaking. He is a participant in the mainstream of life. When he campaigns and meets people, he listens and remembers. He is able to assimilate information when it fits his mental framework and to accommodate information when it does not. President Clinton's actions after winning the election make this point.

During transition, President-elect Clinton endorsed a number of policies of the Bush administration. These included the stance on Haitian refugees and the bombing of Iraq. Further, he adopted the organization, process, and structure of the Bush-

Scowcroft National Security Council Staff process. These examples illustrate nonpartisan rational thought and openmindedness uncharacteristic of many national political figures.

Ideologically, President Clinton has the reputation of a "New Democrat." During the campaign, it was clear that the "Old Democrats" decided to lay low. As a New Democrat, he seems pragmatic. He intends to use the power of government where it advances national interests and to eliminate it where it does not. His spending cuts reflect this. His domestic and economic focus, including higher taxes, reflect traditional Democratic Party doctrine but his process of slashing government does not. Simple math says this will reduce the deficit and the Congress is doing the president one better in proposed budget cutting. It remains to be seen whether the plan will correct supply-side and trickle-down economic policies of the recent past.

President Clinton's Advisors

> Almost 30 years ago in the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, the lives of a young Army lieutenant -- Les Aspin -- and three very junior Foreign Service officers in their mid-20's -- Anthony Lake, Peter Tarnoff and Frank Wisner -- touched one another. Today, the four sit at the pinnacle of power and together with Secretary of State Warren Christopher, form two interlocking triangles that will command America's national security machinery.[97]

The Scowcroft NSC system was well received by Lake. Clinton's team reflects diversity of views with plenty of ideas and intellect but tempered by a Secretary of State with a sense of proportion and patience. Although Gelb says Aspin and Lake

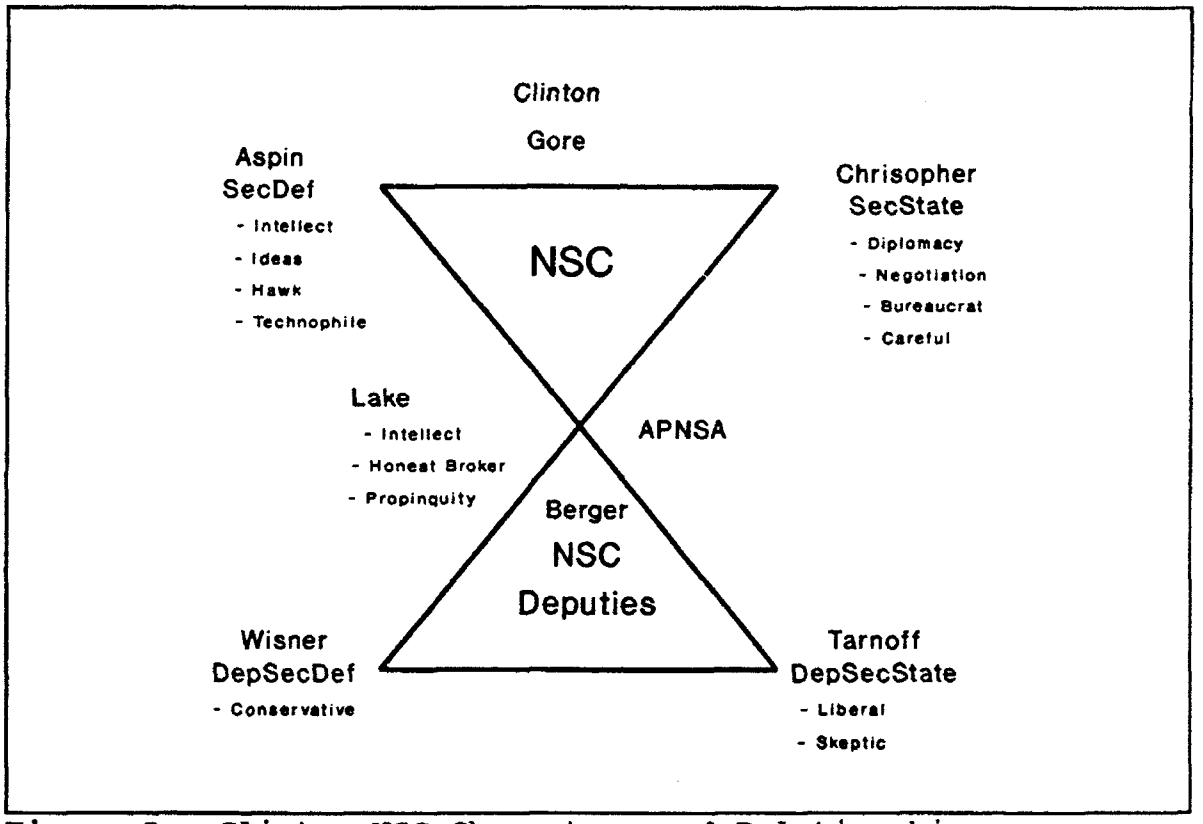



**Figure 5.** Clinton NSC Characters and Relationships

will shape strategy while Christopher counsels and reacts, recent events would reverse the roles of Lake and Christopher based on the moderation of the Bosnia policy. The players have known one another for decades, understand one another, and are not predisposed to violently disagree. Christopher is most experienced, methodical, and wise.[98] Lake may be the intellect but he will not be dominant in national security. Christopher will be first among equals. Christopher is an old hand at coalition building and bureaucracy. Kissinger, by the way, was both a master bureaucrat and a powerful visionary and intellect.[99] Other than Colin Powell, it is Christopher who is most likely to prevent inappropriate involvement in hot spots

such as Bosnia.[100] Like the Bush NSC, the Clinton NSC principles and deputies are personally compatible. Clinton and Lake agree that the NSC staff should formulate, coordinate, integrate, and follow up but should not advocate or implement policy.[101]

The first staff meeting under Lake was long, participative, chatty, and much less formal than under Scowcroft. It seemed that issues would be discussed more openly. There is a structural interface with the National Economic Council in that Lake's deputy sits on the NEC and Rubin's deputy sits in on the NSC. European issues have been broken into west and Central/east and proliferation has its own directorate now.[102]

Decisionmaking by Recent Presidents

This reviews decisionmaking by recent presidents as a way to view and predict the evolution of Clinton's national security decisionmaking process.

President Nixon. Nixon invested Henry Kissinger with enormous authority as the lead in foreign policy. As mentioned previously, Nixon preferred consulting with only Kissinger and other close advisors and did not care to be in large groups or to be participative with the public or the media.

President Carter. Carter developed a highly structured system under Brzezinski but infrequently attended national security council meetings. Immersed in details and people he preferred, he neither stepped up to the broad issues nor articulated strategy or policy effectively. His lack of national and international experience; his lack of knowledge about the

intricacies of foreign and defense policies, his mixed assortment of appointments... [prevented] a smoothly functioning administrative team. In fact, no "team" was possible with Brzezinski the "hawk" and Vance and Mondale the "doves."[103]

President Reagan. Reagan chaired many NSC meetings and made decisions there but the meetings were generally "scripted" and very formal. He essentially "ratified" recommendations formulated by his staff. Although Reagan is collecting praise for his foreign policy regarding the collapse of the former Soviet Union, he did not start off with a good foreign policy team. With Haig as Secretary of State trying to grab early power and control over a vastly diminished role of the APNSA, only Weinberger could counter Haig's aggressiveness. No presidential decision on the national security process was to be published until a year after his inauguration. The Reagan machinery was seen by some to "bog down in confusion, controversy, and intramural warfare...compounded by the persistent failure to spell out a coherent international policy."[104]

President Bush. Bush started with and kept a superb foreign policy team. With Baker as lead in matters of policy and Bush himself a skilled foreign policy professional, Scowcroft played the role of a superbly informed honest broker and consensus builder. Although it is too early for history to evaluate the Bush administration on foreign policy, it is likely to be favorable. Building and leading the coalition for the Persian Gulf War, deftly supporting the collapse of the Soviet Union and

emergence of democratic east European republics are but a few examples of what should be an impressive legacy. Regarding process, Bush used NSC meetings for discussion but did not make decisions there. Afterward, he would meet with Baker/Eagleberger and Scowcroft to make decisions. By nature President Bush was personally close-hold. Some attribute this to Northeast patrician heritage, far east experience as former ambassador to China, and experience as Director of Central Intelligence. Baker is similar in his dealings.[105] President Bush was criticized for lack of vision and consistent policy and strategy, and for not knowing what the larger questions were. Further, he did not articulate well his strongly held views.[106]

The Clinton Presidency

Strengths. President Clinton's major asset is collective decisionmaking and problem solving. He has the social skills and intellect to extract optimum quality within normal presidential constraints. He has assembled a team of appropriately like-minded advisors and people of talent to advise him. The president is neither an ideologue nor pragmatist. He knows how to listen and enjoys adapting and learning. Similar to President Reagan, he knows himself and what his strengths and weaknesses are. Like President Carter, he tends to be more common but that may be a reflection of his generation. He is certainly not from patrician heritage. He focuses on "we" and the nation. But he is not likely to lose strategic focus as did President Carter.

President Clinton has taken a bold step toward national

security with a serious economic program to reduce the federal budget deficit. More importantly, President Clinton is trying to improve American values and culture. His initiatives for health care reform, the Civilian Community Corps, public education, domestic engagement by the military, sacrifice, investment, higher taxes, welfare reform, investment and saving, infrastructure renewal, and environmental protection demonstrate understanding of national strength and security. He may operate on the assumption that foreign and defense policy can take a subordinate role to domestic and economic policy for the near term. There is risk. But it may be small compared to missing the opportunity to revitalize the nation while the threat of global nuclear war is low.

Foreign policy initiatives of slowing population growth and sustainable economic development while controlling arms proliferation supports the domestic aims and preserves world resources. It is an appropriate vision of what should be. President Clinton is the first president with no military experience in fifty years. That America voted him president is evidence that defense policy and resources should be subordinate to domestic policy for the first time in sixty years. He is the first president of his generation and his views reflect it. He has high aims for improving the general standard of existence for America. Correcting the domestic course may be the most important act of this generation to secure the future for those who follow.

Weaknesses. President Clinton's focus on the domestic agenda may be at the price of foreign policy. Although he sees the U.S economy as the centerpiece of national security, U.S. allies and adversaries may not. Should the Europear Community or Japan feel U.S friendship weakening, pursuing more open trade and with fewer defense ties may hurt the U. S. economy and exacerbate the overall security posture. President Clinton should strive to meet his campaign perspective that foreign economic and political engagement is best for U.S. economic security.

President Clinton does not understand the culture or application of military force. It foreign to him as he has had little experience with it. Matters of defense will be an intellectual exercise for him. He is not likely to develop the instincts to add value to the military decision process. He will be dependent on advice. If his advisors collectively suppress high quality advice from Defense, that element of national power will probably be used improperly. In this regard, it is important that General Powell's successor as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs not be selected for similarity to the president's views of defense; for they would be the views of an amateur. President Clinton can best demonstrate his political savvy by selecting the new chairman for his grasp of national strategy, military strategy, and national security.

Of the NSC principals, Secretary Aspin may be least well qualified to represent his department in national security strategy. Like Clinton, he studied at Yale and Oxford plus he

has a doctorate in economics from MIT. He is brilliant and he is a defense expert -- but not a strategist, a decisionmaker, or experienced leader of huge organizations. He has been a congressman for 22 years, was one of McNamara's young whiz kids 25 years ago, and has led nothing larger than the 80 person House Armed Services Committee. Perhaps most dangerous is that he loves analysis and likes to go for the 100 percent solution.[107] Recall the analysis-laden McNamara defense process of the Vietnam years. Then Secretary of Defense McNamara had no national military strategy or theater strategy for Vietnam -- no surprise as President Johnson had no coherent national security strategy on which to base a military strategy. Even today, Secretary Aspin says he turned against the Vietnam war because the goal was not worth the resources required.[108] He has oversimplified it. A strategist might comment that given the appropriate strategic aims and strategic operational concepts, the U.S. had ample resources to meet the aims. President Clinton and Secretary Aspin are a brilliant pair as were JFK and McNamara. And like that pair from the sixties, the lack of perspective, education, and experience in military strategy weakens that element of national power for deliberate planning and crisis response.

Relating Decisionmaking to National Security Strategy

In sum, the fragmented foreign military threat to national security presents the best opportunity since the early twentieth century to redress fundamental problems in the domestic American condition. In that regard, perhaps a Cold War president with

like-minded advisors is not the best choice for the times. Although President Clinton has a serious deficiency in dealing with national defense, the issues he chose to address in his campaign are perhaps the most vital to American security today. The people he has chosen to advise him combined with his personal and political competence bode well for presidential decision quality in general. Since he is an activist leader, the potential is high that traditional impediments to collective decision processes may be reduced. That same active nature may distract him from the deep thought and the most important decisions he has yet to make -- those that will produce his national security strategy. Presidential decisionmaking as well as decisionmaking at lower levels of government are facilitated by a national security strategy that integrates the national objectives, strategic concepts, and national resources to secure U.S. interests for the next generation. The last national security document published is over President Bush's signature. President Clinton has described in broad terms the ends he hopes to achieve during his administration. Considering the global and domestic forces pulling him in all directions, it is of utmost importance that he put his strategic leader competence and national security decision machine to the task of publishing a well-thought out national security strategy to keep the nation focused on that for which voters elected him. The next section of this study addresses strategy formulation and illustrates several ways to go about it. Although the chapter draws quite

heavily on the work of strategists of military background, the frameworks enable the president and his advisors to organize the variables and proceed with strategy formulation.

## IV. EMERGING NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY - 1993

> You have won the Presidency at a unique juncture in our history. The decline in America's global competitiveness, economic stagnation and the end of the Cold War have transformed the policy agenda. To address these new challenges, you will need to harness government process to administration purpose, and make the powers of the government work for you.[109]

Above, in a memorandum to President-elect Clinton, The Commission on Government Reform states the president's *raison d'etre*. The Cold War ended and 1990 joined 1815, 1898 and 1945 as a symbolic year of change in the international system and the American role in it.[110] The Cold War national strategy is no longer viable. Former President Bush may have lost the election because he did not articulate a suitable vision for the nation. This is a time for vision and a national security strategy to pursue the vision.

National security strategy formulation will require the best work of President Clinton and his advisors. Conceptual strategic leader competencies of vision, intellect, temperament, and tenacity contributed to President Clinton's success as a national-level politician. Technical and interpersonal competencies that were decisive in his rise to the presidency are his political, consensus building, climate setting, and public speaking skills. Many of the same qualities promise high quality presidential decisions. Decisionmaking in formulating national security strategy will also require competence as a strategist, understanding of second- and third- order effects, self-efficacy, and boldness. President Clinton's national security strategy

must integrate national ends, ways, and means and be compelling not only to the Congress, the media, and the American people; it must be compelling to the world. It must be simple enough to stand as a touchstone and comprehensive enough to aid in decisions that incorporate all elements of national power. The strategy must help coordinate diverse, conflicting policy instruments already in existence and those under development. The strategy must also assist in the interpretation of world events as they effect U.S. national interests. Indeed, national security strategy should be the very best work an administration can produce.

This section reviews a number of strategy models and proposes one hybrid model that relates vision and strategy formulation. An assessment of the role top national leaders have played in recent strategy formulation reveals how the Congress, usually too fragmented to lead, can in fact sometimes lead.

National strategy is viewed from two perspectives. Both aid the understanding of the emerging strategy. The perspective consistent with preceding sections of this study is the role of national defense in national security. The second perspective is that of a citizen who votes in presidential elections.

Government leaders who influence the emerging strategy are President's Bush and Clinton, Senator Nunn, and Secretary of Defense Aspin. During a period of significant change in the geo-political landscape, national security strategy should be articulated by the president to set the course. The military

component of national security strategy seems to have been set more by Senator Nunn in the past six years than by the president. This provides an interesting study for potential military advisors to strategic leaders.

Some influential leaders question the value of senior military officers' contributions to national security strategy. Senior military officers are supposed to advise strategic leaders and it is instructive to consider the receptiveness of those leaders to military advice. Just before [Defense Secretary Aspin] took over in January 1993, one of his associates said,

> The Army: It's as if they have two boxes that have to be checked before someone is promoted. One, *politically inastute*. Two, *public relations moron*. If those boxes are checked positively, promote to general.[111] [emphasis added]

National strategy is highly political since it deals in national values and interests. Politics has been defined as the brokering of values in a polity. Further, "articulating strategy" is a public relations task of teaching citizens what national interests should be. It seems Mr. Aspin's associate would not value advice from his generals and admirals. Specifically on strategy, W. Y. Smith reminds us that, "...military professionals have made only meager contributions at best to U.S. strategic thinking. Broad concepts to guide actions have come from civilians, not from the military."[112] Jablonsky provides another admonishment from Clemenceau "...that war is too serious to be left to generals in the Clausewitzian sense that military means must be governed by the political ends to which they are

applied."[113]

Military expertise in the Clinton administration and the new Congress is low by historical standards. Therefore, presidential receptiveness to military advice also seems to be low. President Clinton's handling of homosexuals in the military is his first demonstration of this. National security strategy is likely to be thin and misdirected when the role of the military element of power is considered. This argues that military strategists must become more politically astute and articulate than they have been.

Strategy, a centuries old concept, has varying definitions and character. The strategic formulation guideline at Figure 6 provides a guide to survey the literature on strategy.[114] Since this study does not deal with the ends, ways and means of national military strategy per se, use of the guideline stops at that point. The literature survey includes writings of historic and modern-day strategists and strategic leaders. The sources proceed from ancients Sun Tzu, Clausewitz, and Jomini, through Liddell Hart, Wylie, Eccles, and Huntington to Lykke, Galvin, and Jablonsky. Each offers definitions, principles, and heuristics related to strategy. The review incorporates current American values and national interests against the geo-political landscape.

Definition of Strategy

Strategy is a plan of action designed to realize a vision of conditions as they should be. The plan of action employs direct

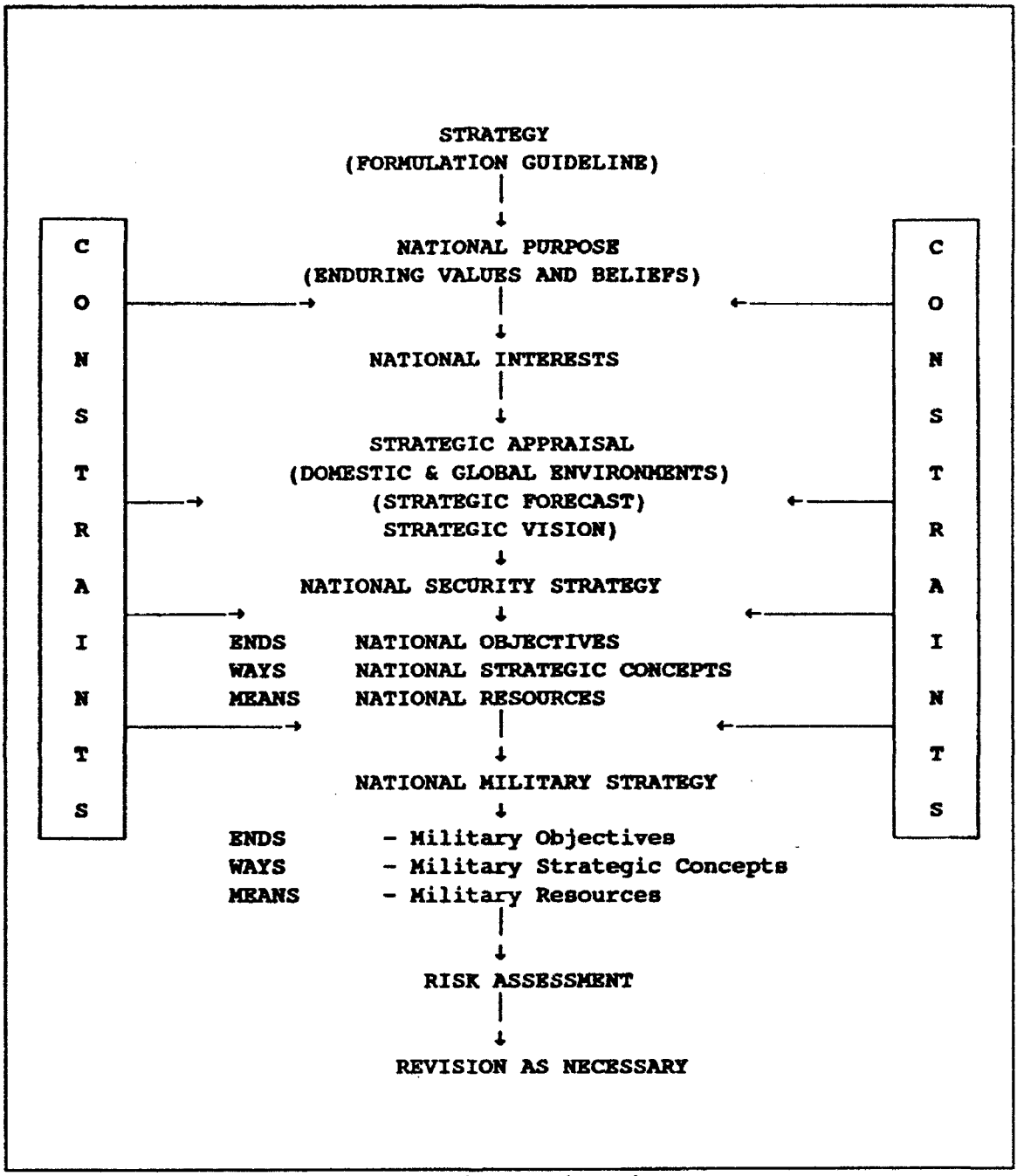



**Figure 6.** Strategy Formulation Guideline

control, influence, persuasion, negotiation, threat of force, and force and integrates the elements of national power to make the envisioned conditions become reality. Wylie points out that strategy would have to be applicable under any restrictions or

limitations...absorb within its conceptual framework [conflicting and overlapping concepts]...and at the same time not be so vague and formless so as to be unusable for planning a strategy to meet a real situation.[115] The study of strategy begins with national purpose which includes values and beliefs.[116]

National Values

"The United States is a big, lumbering, pluralistic, affluent, liberal, democratic, individualistic, materialistic if not hedonistic, and technologically supremely sophisticated society...The question is: What does the nature of American society and of earlier American strategic traditions tell us..?"[117] Some of the more unflattering characteristics of American society conflict with the values earlier times. Expectations for success and possessions grow while willingness to sacrifice, save, invest, and postpone gratification decreases. Following are some thoughts on the effects of these new values.

The Vietnam experience illustrates an American value that may be most responsible for the economic and domestic condition as well as militate most strongly against a long-term strategy to correct our course. Impatience is the value but may be more appropriately called a part of the American character.

> Americans, being impetuous, abhor the strategy of protracted war which seems to suit stoic orientals. Weaknesses in the American character were to play their part. Of these, the greatest was and still is impatience...More than any other factor, coupled with the frustrations which automatically follow, it had led to a desire for quick results which, in a war concerned with people immune to application of power, are just not obtainable.[118]

In a free society, strategy is heavily affected by the values of the people of the nation concerned. If these values are confused, contradictory, or superficial, the strategy adopted will have similar characteristics.[119] Elected officials or those they appoint are decisionmakers on grand strategy. Historic values demand that: the state exists to serve man, not that man exists to serve the state; that good ends do not justify bad means; that truth and justice are governed by standards of fact and equity, not that they can be deliberately distorted to mean anything that serves the purpose of the state.[120] Such values ring true to Americans but may be less operative than more personal, selfish pressures exerted by constituents.

Despite a more impatient and selfish society, Americans still ascribe to lofty standards on how government exercises the elements of power. The values listed below, perceived or otherwise, have emerged in the United States from national myths and traditions. They constrain the strategist who serves at the pleasure of the electorate.[121]

- Never strike the first blow
- Fight fairly in accordance with the rules
- Champion the underdog
- Avoid secret alliances or agreements
- Submit all major strategic decisions for popular approval
- Support minimum forces in peacetime; mobilize for war

Admiral Eccles has described the American conflict between personal and national values and hence, a low expectation for

effective foreign policy.

> A people cannot expect to separate their sense of values into independent or unrelated parts. If they have one set of values for daily life, for personal conduct, language, recreation, and economics, and a contrary set of values for national and international affairs and policy, they cannot expect to achieve national objectives. The more such contradiction occurs, the greater will be the confusion and frustration both in domestic and foreign affairs...If civilian attitudes are going to remain selfish and short-sighted, then expectations of the maintenance of national power should be modest.[122]

Although America remains the only "full-service superpower" as Dan Rather would say, the nation is currently diminished economically and culturally. Despite the importance of military strength, economic strength is the key to continuing world leadership.

National Interests

The discussion of national values above suggests that divining national interests from diverse, conflicting values is difficult for a government. The president must sometimes tell the nation what the national interests should be. He must be a leader since the presidency is the only institution established to lead. National interests are defined as fundamental concerns of the nation, such as self-preservation, independence, national integrity, economic well-being, or access to raw materials and economic markets.[123] National interests by convention fall into the categories of survival, vital, major, and peripheral. Post-Cold War American strategic interests are:

> - to maintain the United States as the premier global power, which in the coming decade means countering the Japanese economic challenge

- to prevent the emergence of a hegemony in Eurasia

- to protect American interests in the Third World, which are primarily in the Persian Gulf and Middle America[124]

To promote stable equilibrium in Eurasia, specific interests are:

- Prevent the total disintegration of the Soviet Union

- Prevent the reimposition of Soviet or Russian control over Eastern Europe

- Limit German power

- Encourage stability by strengthening new democracies in Eastern Europe

- Constrain Japanese power in East Asia by continuing US-Japanese military alliance and Korean unification.

- Prevent possible Chinese expansion[125]

The disconnect between national values and interests is stark. The above interests are indeed contrived. They should be the national interests but there is not a firm conceptual linkage between actual national values and national interests. Likewise, personal values are not linked to espoused national values which in turn, do not translate well to interests.

As Eccles has pointed out, such inconsistencies in values should diminish citizens' expectations of securing national interests. Conflict shows further in debated assumptions about how to formulate strategy. Note that each assumption below can be stated positively or negatively depending on the issue a proponent argues.

Force is (not) outmoded as a foreign policy tool.
The US does (not) need to be number one.
Domestic needs should (not) take priority over defense.
Alliances are (not) preferable to unilateral defense.
The US should (not) be the world's policeman.

Asia should (not) dominate US regional policy.
US support should (not) be limited to democratic regimes.
Time is (not) on our side in any ideological struggle.
Budget should (not) dictate strategy.[126]

Jablonsky has described a paradigm as a set of shared assumptions. The incongruence of the above assumptions at least tells us that no strategy can at the same time be a paradigm. However, as shown later, strategy must be a product of consensus which is agreement and shared ideas of another type.

Vision

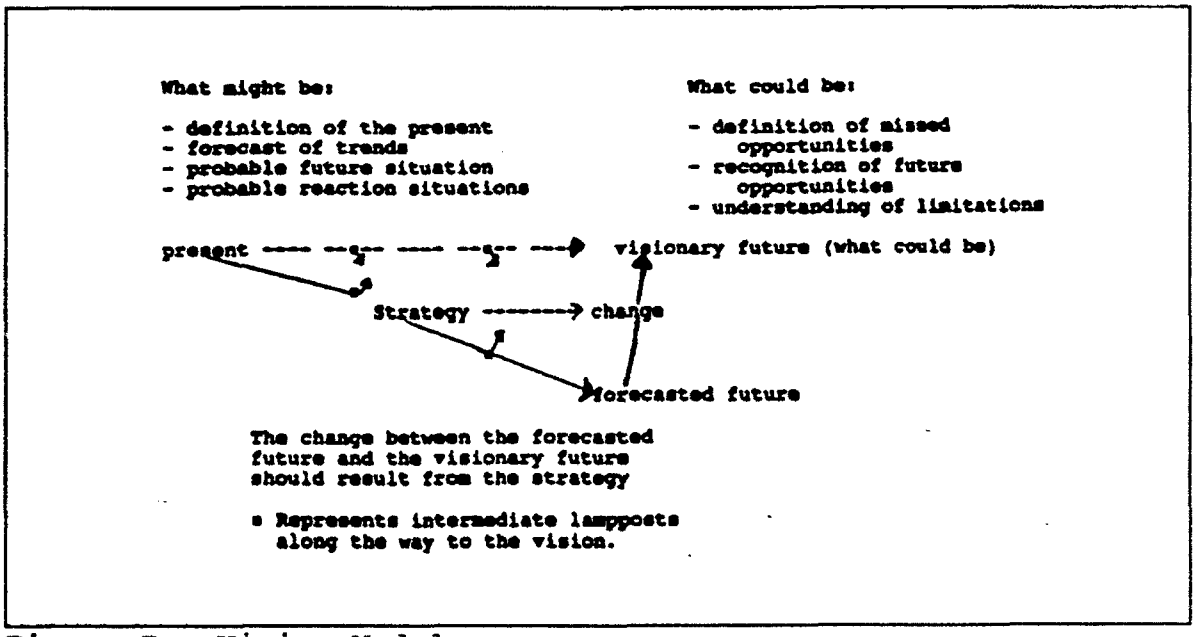



**Figure 7.** Vision Model

In the United States vision is blurred by consensus requirements. Consensus is needed between the political parties in the Congress and the executive departments to implement policy. It requires significant negotiation, compromise, and eventual agreement.

Agreeing on a distant vision requires strong belief on the part of the visionary. He must believe that the vision can

become reality. Belief must be based not in naivete but in reality, wisdom, and experience in dealing with the forces that would mitigate the vision. The model at Figure 7 shows the relationship of what is, what might be, and what could be if strategy is effective.[127] Ikle characterizes forces that would confound the visionary strategist:

> ...the contradictions outweigh the harmonies, the uncertainties overwhelm the established facts, the proofs remain utterly incomplete, and yet the stakes exceed all earthly objectives...he has to allow for the swirling currents and blurred edges of psychology, political science, and history; and he needs to fit all this into the dynamic of international conflict among nations -- a dynamic of opposing objectives and clashing forces that is driven as much by human stubbornness as by human error.[128]

Perry Smith equates strategic vision to long-range planning. In this sense he says that strategic planning "is a way of thinking about the future, thinking about what we want (that is defining objectives and interests), thinking about the conditions which are likely to surround us in pursuing our objectives (projecting alternative environments), and thinking about ways to achieve our objectives either within the constraints of these environments or by influencing events to achieve a preferred environment..."[129]

The conditions under which national vision is being shaped include the specific realities of the four deficits:

> ...the budget deficit with the concomitant political imperative of reducing government spending; the trade deficit and the ever more obvious attendant need to make U.S. industry competitive in the world market; the social deficit visible in every congressional district from problems in education, law enforcement and drug use to the need for health care, housing and new

> capital infrastructure; and finally the threat deficit which coincides with the upswing in domestic demands on resources caused by other deficits.[130]

President Clinton's vision, based on who he is and his view of the world, is focused "like a laser on the economy." Foreign policy and national security policy seem to be taking a long and distant second to domestic policy and the economy. In fairness, a vision of quality of life and the human condition, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in a viable ecosystem is one of high ideals. However, in a world that is at once breaking up and reforming politically under conditions of cultural and economic strife, if not war, beckons mightily for national security strategy and coherent foreign policy. The U.S. will not heal in a vacuum.

Consensus

There is one currency in U.S. national security; consensus.[131] Policy statements by either a congressional committee or the president are only declarative unless there is consensus; foreign governments know this as well as informed citizens. Another consensus required is interdepartmental when formulating national security strategy in the NSC. As the Congress does not put the NSS through a ratification process, they may or may not support the strategy, which again returns us to the need for consensus. W.Y Smith adds to this aspect of strategy formulation regarding treaties and alliances for collective security which are particularly important as the U.S. pursues global engagement while reducing national defense.

> Building and maintaining a consistent and effective policy among sovereign nations carries with it a price. Individual government initiatives, no matter how wise or how important the member state that proposes them, must bear the close scrutiny and ultimately gain the support of a broad range of opinion that may be congruent on basic objectives but less united on the means to achieve those ends. The new pattern may well make definitive, dramatic actions to resolve a crisis less likely because the requirements for consensus will almost certainly entail compromises among differing perceptions of the appropriate next steps.[132]

Smith sees that national and cultural differences of "values" and "interests" have further implications:

> (1) Alliances should be based both on clear mutual interest and on common values. (2) Where an alliance is made with a nation that holds different national values, it should be of a short-term nature and it should not be expected to withstand a severe stress. (3) Sometimes it is politically or psychologically expedient to make treaties of alliance or other formal commitments for mutual action or policy with nations or groups that have different values. In such circumstances great care should be taken to distinguish between the propaganda or public-relations aspects of the agreement and the expectations one actually has for the fulfillment of the obligations incurred.

National Security Strategy

In the models of national security strategy, the common aspect of each is people. Whether it is the values, interests, and culture or the psychological instrument of national security policy, or the people of Clausewitz's "Remarkable Trinity" it is humankind and human nature that is the common prime determinant of strategy. A government which is unaware of society's values cannot articulate national interest and build consensus. Such a government cannot hope to develop a strategy.

Warriors, statesmen, and strategists must understand the will of the people. One of Mao's six rules is to have close

cohesion between the army and civil population. Of Lenin's three rules, two deal with people: (1) The country and the army must be closely knit and (2) psychological action must pave the way for military action. These 20th century revolutionary leaders believed in what Clausewitz may have been first to recognize in his remarkable trinity of people, government, and military. Howard asserts:

> ...the social, the attitude of the people upon whose commitment and readiness for self-denial this logistical power ultimately depended. Clausewitz had described war as "a remarkable trinity," composed of its political objective, of its operational instruments, and of the popular passions, the social forces it expressed. It was the latter...that made the wars of the French Revolution so different in kind from those of Frederick the Great, and which would probably so distinguish any wars in the future. In this he was right.[133]

One of the enduring values that binds the synergistic effect of national power is sacrifice by the people. Wartime elicits this nobel value more than does peaceful competition. In that regard, perhaps no more stirring an exhortation has been given than that of Winston Churchill in 1940 as Great Britain mobilized for World War II:

> Come then: let us to the task, to the battle, to the toil -- each to our part, each to our station. Fill the armies, rule the air, pour out the munitions, strangle the U-boats, sweep the mines, plough the land, build the ships, guard the streets, succor the wounded, uplift the downcast, and honor the dead.[134]

New U.S. policy formulation focuses more on domestic issues than on foreign policy and deterrence. The classic stimulus for sacrifice is not present. A direct military threat to national security is at an historic low. In national security Americans

are generally unwilling to sacrifice to correct domestic problems. President Clinton's campaign on the domestic agenda enabled him to defeat President Bush. President Bush did not articulate a domestic agenda. His decent from the highest presidential approval rating in American history after the Persian Gulf War to defeat in a general election by an alleged draft dodger, says much about American interests. Unwillingness to sacrifice is something Americans learned in part from supply-side economics of the past 12 years "...the ultimate message from [President Reagan's] tenure in office was that the United States might aspire to great ends without enduring hardships in conjuring up the means.[135]

In his studies of strategy and operational art, Jablonsky refers to the elements of national power as the horizontal plane of national strategy shown at Figure 8.[136] The economic, psychological, political, and military elements of power vary in utility based on the needs of society and government. In the U.S. role as global leaders, it is critical that the government apply the correct

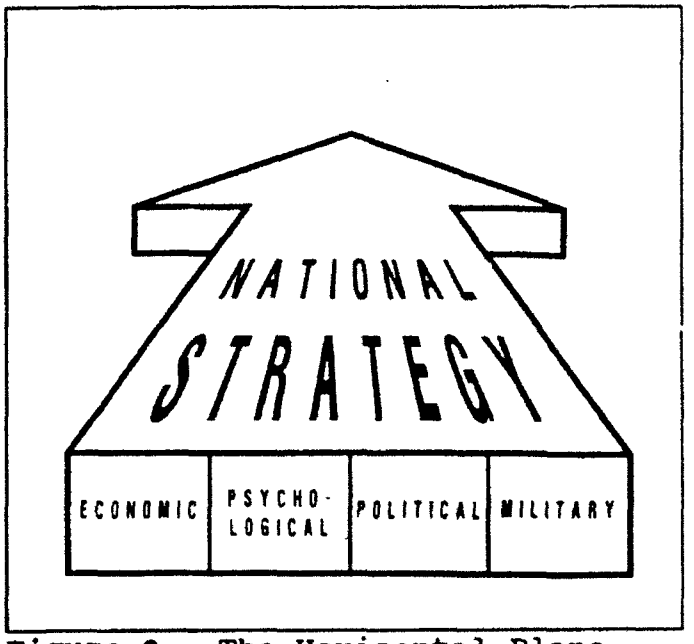



**Figure 8.** The Horizontal Plane of National Strategy

policy instrument to pursue national survival and vital national interests.

On a scale of high, medium, and low, American economic and psychological power is low compared to high political and military power.[137] U.S. political power comes from world leadership for the past half-century based on former status in all four categories of the horizontal plane. A growing debt represents an imbalance of revenues and outlays that has decreased political power and continues to do so. This imbalance and associated risk is shown best by Lykke's model of Ends, Ways, and Means.

Ends, Ways, and Means

Arthur Lykke's model presents strategy as the governing concept that integrates the ends, ways, and means of, in the case of this study, national security. The model may also apply to military strategy and theater strategy. Ends, ways, and means must be balanced or national security may be in jeopardy. If resources are not compatible with strategic concepts or commitments are not matched by capabilities . . .

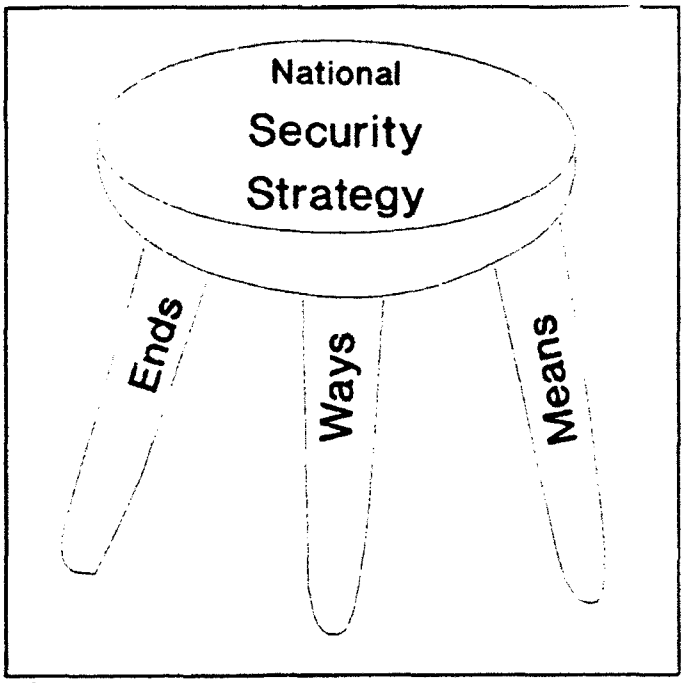



**Figure 9.** Strategy=Ends+Ways+Means

there is risk which is proportional to the size of the imbalance.[138] As with military strategy, national security strategy must meet the tests of suitability (meet desired *ends*?), feasibility (*ways* - can it be done?), and acceptability (*means* - at a reasonable cost?).[139,140]

The cornerstone of U.S. national security has been military and government cannot ensure security without it. With the demise of the Soviet military machine, the U.S. is cutting the military force structure by more than one-third by 1995. With a change in threat against which strategists determine many national security objectives or *ends* and the U.S. military build-down of *means*, strategic *ways* must be modified. Following is a summary of the revised military strategy following Lykke's "ends, ways, and means" paradigm. The objectives and strategic concepts are current. However, the means or resources are subject to further reductions causing imbalance and risk to national security in a military sense. The question is whether or not that imbalance is more important than the political, economic, and psychological. Clausewitz reminds us that a prince or a general can best demonstrate his genius by managing a campaign exactly to suit his objectives and his resources, doing neither too much nor too little.[141] President Clinton's challenge is to match national security ends to ways and means to meet both the domestic challenge and foreign risks.

Clear cut national military objectives or "ends" are:

- Deter or defeat aggression, singly, or in concert with

allies
- Ensure global access and influence
- Promote regional stability and cooperation
- Stem the flow of illegal drugs
- Combat terrorism[142]

Strategic concepts or the "Ways" are:

- Strategic Deterrence and Defense
- Forward Presence
- Crisis Response
- Reconstitution

With supporting concepts and capabilities of:

- Readiness
- Collective security
- Arms control
- Maritime and aerospace superiority
- Strategic agility
- Power projection
- Technological superiority
- Decisive force[143]

Military means are shown in force structure numbers at Figure 10. The column categories reflect the 1991 numbers, then General Powell's Base force numbers, and finally the numbers emerging from the clinton administration. The Clinton numbers are seriously lower than the floor established by General Powell.[144,145]

Strategy-Vision Hybrid Model

Crossing Jablonsky's horizontal plane of national power elements with the vision formulation model and interjecting Lykke's strategic paradigm between the forecasted future and the visionary future places strategic variables in the correct position relative to each another. The Strategy-vision Hybrid Model at Figure 11 illustrates this concept. In the horizontal

| Service | Force | FY91 | Base Force | Clinton |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Strategic** | Bombers | B52+B1 | B52H+B1+B2 | |
| | Missiles | 1000 | 550 | |
| | SSBN | 34 | 18 | |
| **Army** | Active | 16 Divs | 12 Divs | |
| | Reserve | 10 | 6 | |
| | Cadre | | 2 | |
| | Total | 26 | 18 | 15 |
| **Navy** | Ships | 530 (15 CVBG) | 450 (12 CVBG) | 340 |
| | Active | 13 Air Wings | 11 Air Wings | |
| | Reserve | 2 Air Wings | 2 Air Wings | |
| **USMC** | Active | 3 MEFs | 3 MEFs | |
| | Reserve | 1 Div/Wing | 1 Div/Wing | |
| **Air Force** | Active | 22 FWE | 15 FWE | |
| | Reserve | 12 FWE | 11 FWE | |
| | Total | 34 | 26 | 21 |

**Figure 10.** Military Means

plane note the change from "psychological" to "cultural" as the latter term represents better the values and interests of society. Also note the order of the elements of national power. The hatch marked arrow suggests that the cultural element affects the economic which affects the political which affects the military. Moreover, any strategy intervention that enhances the cultural element should in turn enhance the other elements of national power. Clearly, there is an interactive effect. A more detailed look at the model clarifies its meaning.

As noted, the elements of national power descend in importance traversing the top of the model from left to right. Why? The first principle of governmental strategy in pursuit of national interest has as its basis national values or

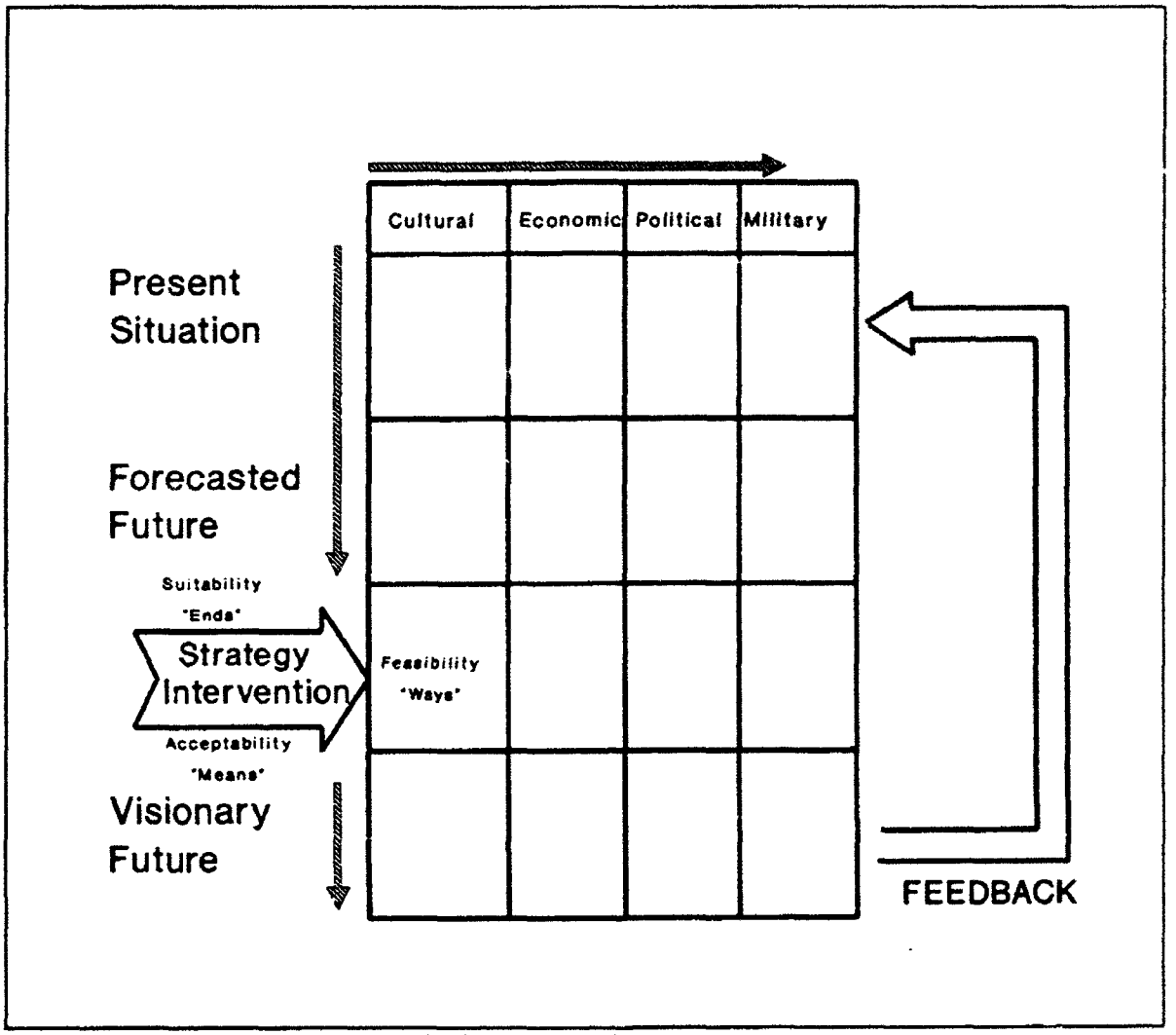



**Figure 11.** Strategy-Vision Hybrid Model

the national culture. Regardless of how culture evolves, its effect on the economy establishes the standard of living for citizens. A national culture that values hard work, initiative, education, economic development, and the rule of law in a land with natural resources and well-developed economic infrastructure will prosper unless the government invokes political measures that corrupt or hinder a free market economy. In a democracy, such a government would be voted out of power. The people will

install a government that enhances domestic processes and national prestige among the nations of the world.

A nation's economic might is the second most fundamental element of national power and the source of peaceful exchange, competition, and benefit of trade. The economy underlies political influence differently from the military. This is principally because economics are based on the trade of goods and services to enhance quality of life for the trading parties. The military element is destructive, coercive, threatening, and grotesquely expensive in national treasure and life.

To sum up, a nation's values embodied in its culture is the primary building block of national power. If the value system is in order, the economy will be optimized and the political element need only strive to support the economy through wise domestic and international policy. The military should be the last choice of power to secure national interests.

The model represents strategy formulation from top to bottom starting with an assessment of the cultural, economic, political, and military condition of the nation. A forecast of policies currently in force provides an estimate of how those policies play out in the domestic and international environments. The visionary future represents the clearest statement of the desired national situation. Significant differences between the forecasted future and the visionary future suggests further analysis and formulation of policy options that will produce a situation closer to the visionary future. That analysis and

formulation is represented by the [national security] strategy intervention. The strategy must integrate ends which comprise the vision, ways that represent the strategic concepts to employ, and means which are the national resources necessary to accomplish the ways and ends.

Strategic ends should be suitable, ways should be feasible, and means should be acceptable. Policy instruments should employ resources in creative ways to meet visionary objectives. The cybernetic or self-correcting aspect of strategy formulation is represented by the feedback arrow which indicates that periodic, scheduled reassessment of the current and forecasted situation must be done.

In effect, the model provides a value-based, logical way to develop national security strategy in pursuit of national vision. It is an orderly way to look at the variables of strategy formulation and implementation. Next is an assessment of the current situation in America in view of the preceding models of strategy.

Present Situation: The Geo-Political Landscape

> The political situation is almost unrecognizable compared to the days before Gorbachev rose and the Berlin Wall fell. Economic power is being redistributed among the Western nations, while the communist-type "command" economies are collapsing. Even so, some physical determinants of national power have not changed. Major demographic trends are essentially the same; the key natural resources are located exactly where they used to be; and in terms of geography, the world's lanes of communications, continents and oceans look the same as at the height of the Cold War.[146]

Bartlett and Holman ask "...three overarching questions:

Where can we do the most to promote democracy, increase trade and prevent aggression? On balance, which region of the globe deserves our primary emphasis and why? What are the strategic implications of that choice?"[147] Spykman's geo-political model, even though it was conceived in 1944, gives a macro description of the world order as it should be:

> Today, we are looking forward to a new peace after the Second World War. The basic issues will remain the same because the geographic factors continue to operate. Balanced power on the Eurasian Continent is one of the objectives for which we are fighting and the establishment of such an equilibrium and its preservation will be our objective when the fight is won. It will then be to the interest of the United States to continue to collaborate with any powers seeking to prevent the consolidation of the rimland regions.[148]

Adding complexity and diversification to the foreign policy process, the Congress plays a more active role as the U.S. pursues foreign relations that best secure national interests. Emerging patterns point out the tension between the executive and legislative branches:

> The United States will be less willing and less able to take unilateral military action than it has been in the past. The U.S. Congress will insist on a more influential role in decisions concerning war and peace...In an environment in which the U.S. is seeking consensus from a wide range of foreign governments, it is readily understandable that the U.S. Congress will demand similar attention. Divergent perceptions of national interests in a world with fewer constraints on actions by national governments will encourage individualism and opportunism that will threaten historic friendships.[149]

<u>The Congress</u>

One major example of how the Congress has assumed power in the national security process is the role taken over the past six

years by Senator Nunn and the Senate Armed Services Committee. In 1987, Senator Nunn chaired a series of committee hearings on national security strategy and national military strategy. These came on the heels of the Goldwater-Nicholls Defense Reorganization Act of 1986. In retrospect, the insight and force of the Congress' incursion into what has been the job of the president and the executive departments is impressive. Defense and the Services had promised reform, but did not follow through. So the Congress enacted law to redress the problem.

Nunn's 1987 hearings lay the groundwork for yet another prescient and important sortie into the military departments. Luminaries from government, academia, and the military gave their views and responded to questions by the committee. The range and sweep of the hearings could not help but sharpen the already well-informed perspectives of the members of the committee. The intent of the hearings was to break strategy apart from the budget process and to separate it from partisan politics. Neither was a complete success as pork and political party interests were clear in both the tone and content of the senators' questions. However, the product of these weeks of hearings was a vastly more educated Senate Armed Services Committee in the realm of military strategy and grand strategy.

In March-April of 1990, Senator Nunn made four speeches on defense budget "blanks." The blanks to which he refers are the missing details of the threat, a new strategy, and how to implement the strategy. This series of presentations had, as the

underlying issue, the 1991 defense budget authorization. Once again, Senator Nunn prepared his committee with hearings from:

> - Representatives of the U.S. intelligence community
>
> - U.S. experts outside the government concerning the changing nature of the threat and its impact of force structure
>
> - European and Japanese experts on allied perceptions of the threat
>
> - Three former secretaries of defense and three former chairmen of the Joint Chiefs on how the U.S. should respond to the changing threat[150]

Following Nunn's series of speeches in August, President Bush gave his Aspen speech which announced the planned build-down of the force and disclosed the elements of a new strategy which included many of the same points made by Senator Nunn.

The latest leadership demonstrated by Senator Nunn is the Civil-Military Cooperative Action Program portion of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1993. The essence of this is yet another refocus of the use of the military. This time it is in support of civil authority on domestic affairs. Once again, the senator enacted legislation, based on consultation with military experts, that fundamentally changed the way the military looks at itself. Jablonsky provides focus:

> ...statesmen will have to demonstrate that the United States can differentiate between vital and peripheral interests in the international arena, without succumbing to psychological insecurities that create a perception of threats to American credibility in every international incident. The American military establishment can help in the process. To begin with, it can establish its relevancy in terms of combatting domestic problems -- generally perceived by the public as the dominant threat to U. S. national security. It is not a new role for the military. West Point, for

> instance, was founded in part to provide a cadre of engineers to help settle the frontier. And throughout American history, the armed forces have been used on such projects as the delivery of mail, the construction of roads, and the operation of the Civilian Conservation Corps.[151]

Furthermore, Senator Nunn anticipated the election of President Clinton and his intent to build-down further than President Bush had planned, bring more forward-deployed forces home and rely further on force projection. Senator Nunn would seem to have a firm grasp on the defense element of national security and is the de facto leader in reshaping defense strategy for the United States.

The President

Since the January 20, 1993 inauguration of President Clinton, there has been a schizophrenic response by the media and public on the daily and weekly performance of the administration. Already news by-lines declare that Clinton's Presidency may not recover from a number of news-worthy policy decisions. John Lewis Gaddis offers some comfort regarding modern heads of government over decades of tension:

> ...that cold war history in fact illustrates a somewhat different point, which has to do with the capacity of individual leaders -- whatever their backgrounds and however improbable the circumstances that catapulted them into their positions of authority - to learn from experience. Virtually all of the major leaders of the cold war demonstrated, to at least some degree, the capacity for reconsideration, maturation and growth, if not always wisdom.[152]

The military is particularly worried about the rate at which President Clinton will learn about the use (and misuse) of military power. Albeit, the American people elected Clinton to

correct domestic problems, he will pursue his aims there while simultaneously deciding when and how to use military force or the threat of force to secure national interests. All president's do this in their role as commander-in-chief. Clausewitz describes clearly the dangers of political-military decisions by politicians who do not understand the use of military power.

> Clausewitz shows us politicians make wrong military decisions primarily because they lack a solid grounding in the military means at their disposal: Only if statesmen look to certain military moves and actions to produce effects that are foreign to their nature do political decisions influence operations for the worse. In the same way as a man who has not fully mastered a foreign language sometimes fails to express himself correctly, so statesmen often issue orders that defeat the purpose they are meant to serve. Time and again that has happened, which demonstrates that a certain grasp of military affairs is vital for those in charge of general policy.[153]

The following views of Secretary of Defense Les Aspin does not bode well for military advice to the president:

> "If the world does nothing about what's going on in Bosnia, what kind of a signal does that send to other places in the Soviet Union and other places where similar things might erupt? ...with the end of the Cold War, the United States can conduct limited military operations and then decide to "back off" without fear of signaling weakness to a superpower adversary. Maybe you use force not to achieve something but to punish people for doing certain things."[154]

The classic reason for the use of American military force has been to protect and secure vital national interests. In his inaugural address, President Clinton added quite another. "When our vital interests are challenged," he said, "*or the will and conscience of the international community is defied*, we will act,

with peaceful diplomacy whenever possible, with force when necessary" (Emphasis added.)[155]

The President does have military strategists at his elbow but seemed to discount their advice, at least publicly, on the military ban on homosexuals. Otherwise astute in cultural matters, President Clinton seemed blind to the military sub-culture of his advisors. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the Service Chiefs give their advice in full knowledge and consideration of the political and economic elements of national power. Furthermore, senior military advisors are very sensitive to human effects in general. When they advise against lifting the ban on homosexuals in the military, it may behoove the president the seriously consider what they say. They understand effects on people. President Clinton missed an opportunity to weigh seriously their advice. As General Galvin points out, the soldier-strategist:

> ...understands the human dimension. He knows what it means to commit people -- in the form of military units -- to action in war. The soldier strategist knows how human beings react to the stresses, agonies, and horrors of war, not only at the lowest reaches, but at the highest levels of government as well. If he is good, he knows his own side intimately and the mind of the adversary as well. He understands national strategy and the international environment, and appreciates the constraints on the use of force and the limits on national resources committed to defense.[156]

In consideration of the mistakes that the President can make on the international scene, there is some reason to worry. However, to apply a military principle, the president's main effort in national security centers on the economy and related

domestic issues. The U.S. domestic situation is complex and declining. In this matter, Eccles in times past wrote that, "The methods of planning and decision, the criteria of judgment and the casual ethics that are adequate for relatively modest risks of most business and *domestic* political decisions are utterly inadequate for the critical political-military decision of today's harsh world of conflict."[157] This is not necessarily so. Foreign affairs, although still complex, are often more tractable and responsive to the president than many domestic affairs. That may be one reason President Bush concentrated so foreign affairs -- it was where he got things done. That is partially why he lost the election, because Mr. Clinton addressed major domestic and economic problems.

<u>President Clinton's Emerging Strategy</u>

The excerpt below from Governor Clinton's address at Georgetown University one year before winning the Presidential election demonstrates that he has a specific vision for the future of America. He balances domestic and international issues. His focus is on domestic issues, the economy, and how the U.S. cannot withdraw from the world.

> Now we've entered a new era, and we need a new vision and the strength to meet a new set of opportunities and threats. We face the same challenge today that we faced in 1946 -- to build a world of security, freedom, democracy, free markets and growth at a time of great change. Anyone running for President right now -- Republican or Democrat -- is going to have to provide a vision for security in this new era. We need to remember the central lesson of the collapse of communism and the Soviet Union. We never defeated them on the field of battle. The Soviet Union collapsed from the inside out -- from economic, political and

spiritual failure. Make no mistake. Foreign and domestic policy are inseparable in today's world. If we're not strong at home we can't lead the world we've done so much to make. And if we withdraw from the world, it will hurt us economically at home. And yet, even as the American Dream is inspiring people around the world, America is on the sidelines, a military giant crippled by economic weakness and an uncertain vision. We need a New Covenant for American Security after the Cold War, a set of rights and responsibilities that will challenge the American people, American leaders and America's allies to work together to build a safer, more prosperous, more democratic world. The strategy of American engagement I propose is based on four key assumptions about the requirements of our security in this new era:

> First - The collapse of communism does not mean the end of danger. A new set of threats in an even less stable world will force us, even as we restructure our defenses, to keep our guard up.
>
> Second - America must regain its economic strength to maintain our position of global leadership. While military power will continue to be vital to our national security, its utility is declining relative to economic power. We cannot afford to go on spending too much on firepower and too little on brainpower.
>
> Third - the irresistible power of ideas rules in the Information Age. Television, cassette tapes and the fax machines helped ideas to pierce the Berlin Wall and bring it down.
>
> Finally - our definition of security must include common threats to all people. On the environment and other global issues, our very survival depends upon the United States taking the lead.[158]

Presidents, or candidates, may speak in broad terms to articulate strategic ends and vision for the future. It is hard to argue with the above quotation from the presidents speech. However, that vision is only the small easy part of national security strategy. The president is obligated to formulate the

details of the objectives, the process and responsibilities to pursue the objectives, and the allocation of resources to support the process. Perhaps the best recent example of how to proceed in strategic matters are Senator Nunn's activities as Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. He has formulated and implemented each aspect of the military element of national security strategy. He has a firm grasp of the threat, of Service strategies to train and equip, and of the CINC's warfighting strategies. Likewise, he is well informed on how much Americans are willing to pay for defense. He is a severe, informed auditor in defense procurement. He may be one of the few civilian members of the national government who is a both a strategic thinker and practitioner. President Clinton would do well to nurture a close personal and political relationship with Senator Nunn. Such a relationship would directly benefit the president's decisions in national defense. Equally important would be the education of the president by an able teacher and practitioner of national security strategy.

## V. CONCLUSION

This study leads to conclusions in two categories. First is that strategic leader competency and presidential decisionmaking are useful for analyzing the human aspects of the national security strategy process. Second are conclusions drawn from applying these analytical methods to the presidency in the 1992-93 time frame. Strategic leader competencies play an important role in presidential decisionmaking. In turn, the most important decisions the president will make are involved in formulating his national security strategy. The strategy in turn facilitates future U.S. security policy decisions.

Applying the concepts of competency, decisionmaking, and strategy to the 1992-93 political year leads to conclusions and interpretations of what has happened. The most significant element of the security environment is the reduced military threat posed by the former Soviet Union. The most significant domestic political event under the conditions of that change was the election of President Clinton. The significance of that election is its reflection of the changing interests of American voters. Perhaps without realizing it, they rejected the national security strategy that had kept them safe since 1947. Along with it they rejected President Bush, the conservative Cold Warrior who was an expert in national security. Voters chose instead a president from a new generation who appeared to put his finger on those things that mattered most to them as Americans.

With that choice, this study reviewed President Clinton on

selected strategic leader competencies. He is potentially a formidable strategic leader. Many of his strengths suggest that the quality of presidential decisions will be adequate if not superior to the those of the Bush and Reagan administrations. However, President Clinton has not produced his national security strategy. A key aspect of his strategy will be national defense and he does not have fundamental expertise in such matters. He has what could be called a strategic blind spot. He has alienated key advisors and people in government who could help cover his blind spot -- most significantly Senator Nunn. The president's military blind spot may be his political Achilles Heel. A misadventure employing the U.S. military is a larger media event than a successful employment. A series of ill-advised defense decisions in force structure for political expediency or to save money courts military disaster in the out years.

A comprehensive national security strategy is of utmost importance now. The only published strategy is President Bush's from January 1993. Naturally, the Clinton administration does not use it. Strategic decisions are being made in the absence of a strategy. If the strategy evolves as a compound of presidential decisions, it cannot integrate national ends, ways, and means to pursue national interest. The strategy will not provide the guidance and criteria necessary to be of use to executive departments and the Congress. As such, the nation remains a rudderless ship.

During the presidential campaign some argued that it is too early to retire the Cold Warriors while others said it is nearly too late to save America from trends of increasing debt, crumbling infrastructure, economic weakness, and cultural violence. Candidates promise to address all of these issues but presidents soon learn that they may only be able steer a course to improve a few critical areas. Presidents tend to excel in crises but often fail to formulate a useful national security strategy for long-term vision. In fact a balanced strategy is needed.

Without the Soviet monolith as a basis for strategy formulation, the whole national security process is more ambiguous and complex. The more it is studied the more policy options diverge. If the president is to formulate a national security strategy that is useful, he must do it to the standards of NSC-68 -- the presidential decision that established the fundamental strategy for U.S. security and victory in the Cold War. President Clinton by his activist nature and considerable intellect is equal to the task of leading the strategy formulation process in the complex security environment of the post Cold War period. He must get on with it.

In conclusion, this study of the presidency suggests that any administration could formulate a clear, comprehensive, useful national security strategy. The strategy can be developed by the president's staff, an independent commission, or both. In each case it would be done in coordination with the Congress. Most

importantly, the president must establish the importance of the national security strategy and set the tone by his interest and participation in the formulation process. He must them use the strategy to give policy guidance, frame security issues, and as a decisionmaking aid. This process connects the formulation investment with the utility of the product. In this way, the national security strategy may secure U.S. national interests for the generation to come.

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141 Clausewitz, 177.

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143 Ibid., 3.

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